

The Centuries' Poetry

AN ANTHOLOGY

COMPILED BY DONALD W. BRIMHAM

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POPE TO KEATS,

PENGUIN BOOKS

HARMONDSWORTH • MIDDLESEX

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Preface

IN this anthology, as with its companion volumes published in the Pelican series, I have relied on my own judgment, disregarding the preferences and prejudices of other anthologists. In doing so I have no doubt myself shown a bias in favour of certain poets and poems at the expense of others which readers may think and many distinguished critics have thought to be of greater merit. I can at least say that my choices have not been made in haste.

It is, of course, not possible to give in the extent of a book limited to 272 pages, a comprehensive idea of English poetry from the reign of Anne to the accession of Victoria, a period that produced pretty well half our greatest poets: Pope, Thomson, Collins, Gray, Cowper, Burns, Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, Keats. There was a temptation to concentrate on these, with a sprinkling of extracts from Gay, Swift, Goldsmith, Scott, and a few others, to the exclusion of many whose fame has tarnished with the years. But there are several eighteenth-century poets who do not quite deserve their fate of utter oblivion. Their representation on a modest scale seemed to me to be required for a balanced picture, and room has, therefore, been found for several resurrections, at the cost of reducing the number of poems by poets of greater eminence.

The fact that the anthology has been compiled during the war against Hitler has perhaps led me to include a greater number of poems having the Napoleonic wars as their subject than might have been the case if the parallel had not lent them a topical interest. Certainly, however, in a re-examination of the poetry of the early nineteenth century from the viewpoint of the times we are living in, such poems acquire an adventitious importance which justifies their choice in place of poems otherwise equally worthy of inclusion.

D. K. R.

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JOSEPH ADDISON

From A Letter from Italy

O Liberty, thou goddess heavenly bright,
Profuse of bliss, and pregnant with delight!
Eternal pleasures in thy presence reign,
And smiling plenty leads thy wanton train;
Eased of her load, subjection grows more light,
And poverty looks cheerful in thy sight;
Thou mak'st the gloomy face of nature gay,
Giv'st beauty to the sun, and pleasure to the day.

Thee, goddess, thee, Britannia's isle adores;
How has she oft exhausted all her stores,
How oft in fields of death thy presence sought,
Nor thinks the mighty prize too dearly bought!
On foreign mountains may the sun refine
The grape's soft juice, and mellow it to wine,
With citron groves adorn a distant soil,
And the fat olive swell with floods of oil:
We envy not the warmer clime, that lies
In ten degrees of more indulgent skies,
Nor at the coarseness of our heaven repine,
Though o'er our heads the frozen Pleiads shine:
'Tis liberty that crowns Britannia's isle,
And makes her barren rocks and her bleak mountains smile.

MATTHEW PRIOR

From Solomon on the Vanity of the World: Knowledge

I know not why the beech delights the glade
With boughs extended, and a rounder shade;
Whilst towering firs in conic forms arise,
And with a pointed spear divide the skies,
Nor why again the changing oak should shed
The yearly honour of his stately head;
Whilst the distinguished yew is ever seen,
Unchanged his branch, and permanent his green.
Wanting the sun why does the caltha fade?
Why does the cypress flourish in the shade?
The fig and date, why love they to remain
In middle station, and an even plain;
While in the lower marsh the gourd is found;
And while the hill with olive shade is crowned?
Why does one climate, and one soil endue
The blushing poppy with a crimson hue;
Yet leave the lily pale, and tinge the violet blue?
Why does the fond carnation love to shoot
A various colour from one parent root;
While the fantastic tulip strives to break
In twofold beauty, and a parted streak?
The twining jasmine, and the blushing rose,
With lavish grace their morning scents disclose;
The smelling tuberoses and jonquil declare,
The stronger impulse of an evening air.
Whence has the tree (resolve me) or the flower
A various instinct, or a different power;
Why should one earth, one clime, one stream, one breath
Raise this to strength, and sicken that to death?

Song

Phillis, since we have both been kind,
And of each other had our fill;
Tell me what pleasure you can find
In forcing nature 'gainst her will.

'Tis true, you may with art and pain
Keep in some glowings of desire;
But still those glowings which remain
Are only ashes of the fire.

Then let us free each other's soul,
And laugh at the dull constant fool
Who would love's liberty control,
And teach us how to whine by rule.

Let us no imposition set,
Or clogs upon each other's heart;
But, as for pleasure first we met,
So now for pleasure let us part.

We both have spent our stock of love,
So consequently should be free;
Thyrsis expects you in yon grove:
And pretty Chloris stays for me.

For My Own Monument

As doctors give physic by way of prevention,
Mat, alive, and in health, of his tombstone took care;

For delays are unsafe, and his pious intention
May haply be never fulfilled by his heir.

Then take Mat's word for it, the sculptor is paid,
That the figure is fine, pray believe your own eye;
Yet credit but lightly what more may be said,
For we flatter ourselves, and teach marble to lie.

Yet, counting as far as to fifty his years,
His virtues and vices were as other men's are;
High hopes he conceived, and he smothered great fears,
In life party-coloured, half pleasure, half care.

Nor to business a drudge, nor to faction a slave,
He strove to make interest and freedom agree;
In public employments industrious and grave,
And alone with his friends, lord, how merry was he!

Now in equipage stately, now humbly on foot,
Both fortunes he tried, but to neither would trust;
And whirled in the round, as the wheel turned about,
He found riches had wings, and knew man was but dust.

This verse little polished, though mighty sincere,
Sets neither his titles nor merit to view;
It says that his relics collected lie here,
And no mortal yet knows too if this may be true.

Fierce robbers there are that infest the highway,
So Mat may be killed, and his bones never found;
False witness at court, and fierce tempests at sea.
So Mat may yet chance to be hanged, or be drowned.

If his bones lie on earth, roll in sea, fly in air,
 To fate we must yield, and the thing is the same;
 And if passing thou giv'st him a smile or a tear,
 He cares not – yet pr'ythee be kind to his fame.

WILLIAM CONGREVE

Song

Tell me no more I am deceived,
 That Chloe's false and common,
 I always knew (at least believed)
 She was a very woman:
 As such I liked, as such caress'd;
 She still was constant when possess'd,
 She could do more for no man.

But oh! her thoughts on others ran;
 And that you think a hard thing!
 Perhaps she fancied you the man;
 And what care I one farthing?
 You think she's false, I'm sure she's kind,
 I take her body, you her mind, –
 Who has the better bargain?

Song

Pious Selinda goes to prayers,
 If I but ask the favour;
 And yet the tender fool's in tears,
 When she believes I'll leave her.

Would I were free from this restraint,
Or else had hopes to win her!
Would she could make of me a saint,
Or I of her a sinner!

JOHN BYROM

A Pastoral

My time, O ye Muses, was happily spent,
When Phoebe went with me wherever I went;
Ten thousand sweet pleasures I felt in my breast:
Sure never fond shepherd like Colin was blest!
But now she is gone, and has left me behind,
What a marvellous change on a sudden I find!
When things were as fine as could possibly be,
I thought 'twas the Spring; but alas! it was she.

With such a companion to tend a few sheep,
To rise up and play, or to lie down and sleep,
I was so good-humour'd, so cheerful and gay,
My heart was as light as a feather all day.
But now I so cross and so peevish am grown,
So strangely uneasy, as never was known.
My fair one is gone, and my joys are all drown'd,
And my heart – I am sure it weighs more than a pound.

The fountain that wont to run sweetly along,
And dance to soft murmurs the pebbles among,
Thou know'st, little Cupid, if Phoebe was there,
'Twas pleasure to look at, 'twas musick to hear:

But now she is absent, I walk by its side,
 And still as it murmurs do nothing but chide,
 'Must you be so cheerful, while I go in pain?
 Peace there with your bubbling, and hear me complain.

My lambkins around me would oftentimes play,
 And Phoebe and I were as joyful as they,
 How pleasant their sporting, how happy the time,
 When Spring, Love and Beauty, were all in their prime!
 But now in their frolicks when by me they pass,
 I fling at their fleeces a handful of grass;
 'Be still,' then I cry, 'for it makes me quite mad
 To see you so merry, while I am so sad.'

My dog I was ever well pleasèd to see
 Come wagging his tail to my fair one and me;
 And Phoebe was pleas'd too, and to my dog said,
 'Come hither, poor fellow'; and patted his head.
 But now, when he's fawning, I with a sour look
 Cry, 'Sirrah'; and give him a blow with my crook:
 And I'll give him another; for why should not Tray
 Be as dull as his master, when Phoebe's away? ..

Will no pitying power that hears me complain,
 Or cure my disquiet, or soften my pain?
 To be cur'd, thou must, Colin, thy passion remove;
 But what swain is so silly to live without love?
 No, Deity, bid the dear nymph to return,
 For ne'er was poor shepherd so sadly forlorn.
 Ah! What shall I do? I shall die with despair;
 Take heed, all ye swains, how ye part with your fair.

Careless Content

I am content, I do not care,
 Wag as it will the world for me;
 When fuss and fret was all my fare,
 It got no ground as I could see:
 So when away my caring went,
 I counted cost and was content.

With more of thanks and less of thought,
 I strive to make my matters meet;
 To seek what ancient sages sought,
 Physic and food in sour and sweet:
 To take what passes in good part,
 And keep the hiccups from the heart.

With good and gentle-humoured hearts,
 I choose to chat where'er I come,
 Whate'er the subject be that starts;
 But if I get among the glum,
 I hold my tongue to tell the troth,
 And keep my breath to cool my broth.

For chance or change of peace or pain,
 For Fortune's favour or her frown,
 For lack or glut, for loss or gain,
 I never dodge, nor up nor down:
 But swing what way the ship shall swim,
 Or tack about with equal trim.

I suit not where I shall not speed,
 Nor trace the turn of every tide;

If simple sense will not succeed,
I make no bustling, but abide:
For shining wealth, or scaring woe,
I force no friend, I fear no foe.

Of ups and downs, of ins and outs,
Of they're i' the wrong, and we're i' the right,
I shun the rancours and the routs;
And wishing well to every wight,
Whatever turn the matter takes,
I deem it all but ducks and drakes.

With whom I feast I do not fawn,
Nor if the folks should flout me, faint:
If wonted welcome be withdrawn,
I cook no kind of a complaint:
With none disposed to disagree,
But like them best who best like me .,

Now taste and try this tempe, sirs,
Mood it and brood it in your breast;
Or if ye ween, for worldly stirs,
That man does right to mar his rest,
Let me be deft, and debonair,
I am content, I do not care.

ISAAC WATTS

Hymn

Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.

Beneath the shadow of thy throne
Thy Saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is thine arm alone,
And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or Earth receiv'd her frame,
From everlasting thou art God,
To endless years the same.

Thy Word commands our flesh to dust
Return, ye sons of men :
All nations rose from Earth at first,
And turn to Earth again.

A thousand ages in thy sight
Are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising Sun.

The busy tribes of flesh and blood
With all their lives and cares
Are carried downwards by thy flood,
And lost in following years.

Time like an ever-rolling stream
 Bears all its sons away;
 They fly forgotten as a dream
 Dies at the opening day.

Like flow'ry fields the nations stand
 Pleas'd with the morning light;
 The flowers beneath the mower's hand
 Lie withering ere 'tis night.

Our God, our help in ages past,
 Our hope for years to come,
 Be thou our guard while troubles last,
 And our eternal home.

ALEXANDER POPE

From An Essay on Criticism

But most by Numbers judge a Poet's song;
 And smooth or rough, with them is right or wrong:
 In the bright Muse, though thousand charms conspire,
 Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire;
 Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,
 Not mend their minds; as some to Church repair,
 Not for the doctrine, but the music there.
 These equal syllables alone require,
 Tho' oft the ear the open vowels tire;
 While expletives their feeble aid do join;
 And ten low words oft creep in one dull line:
 While they ring round the same unvar'y'd chimes,
 With sure returns of still expected rhymes;

Where'er you find 'the cooling western breeze,'
 In the next line, it 'whispers through the trees':
 If crystal streams 'with pleasing murmurs creep,'
 The reader's threaten'd (not in vain) with 'sleep':
 Then, at the last and only couplet fraught
 With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,
 A needless Alexandrine ends the song
 That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.
 Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know
 What's roundly smooth, or languishingly slow;
 And praise the easy vigour of a line,
 Where Denham's strength, and Waller's sweetness join.
 True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
 As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance.

From *The Rape of the Lock*

And now, unveil'd, the Toilet stands display'd,
 Each silver Vase in mystic order laid.
 First, rob'd in white, the Nymph intent adores,
 With head uncover'd, the Cosmetic pow'rs.
 A heav'nly image in the glass appears,
 To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears;
 Th' inferior Priestess, at her altar's side,
 Trembling begins the sacred rites of Pride.
 Unnumber'd treasures ope at once, and here
 The various off'rings of the world appear;
 From each she nicely culls with curious toil,
 And decks the Goddess with the glitt'ring spoil.
 This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
 And all Arabia breathes from yonder box.
 The Tortoise here and Elephant unite,
 Transform'd to combs, the speckled, and the white.

Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
 Puffs, Powders, Patches, Bibles, Billet-doux.
 Now awful Beauty puts on all its arms;
 The fair each moment rises in her charms,
 Repairs her smiles, awakens ev'ry grace,
 And calls forth all the wonders o' her face;
 Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
 And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.
 The busy Sylphs surround their darling care,
 These set the head, and those divide the hair,
 Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown;
 And Betty's prais'd for labours not her own.

From Windsor Forest

Hail, sacred peace! hail, long-expected days,
 That Thames's glory to thy stars shall raise!
 Tho' Tiber's streams immortal Rome behold,
 Tho' foaming Hermus swells with tides of gold,
 From heav'n itself though sev'nfold Nilus flows,
 And harvests on a hundred realms bestows;
 These now no more shall be the Muse's themes,
 Lost in my fame, as in the sea their streams.
 Let Volga's banks with iron squadrons shine,
 And groves of lances glitter on the Rhine,
 Let barb'rous Ganges arm a servile train;
 Be mine the blessings of a peaceful reign.
 No more my sons shall dye with British blood
 Red Iber's sands, or Ister's foaming flood:
 Safe on my shore each unmolested swain
 Shall tend the flocks, or reap the bearded grain;
 The shady empire shall retain no trace
 Of war or blood, but in the sylvan chase;

The trumpet sleep, while cheerful horns are blown,
And arms employ'd on birds and beasts alone.

To Mrs M. B. on her Birthday

Oh be thou blest with all that Heav'n can send,
Long health, long youth, long pleasure, and a friend
Not with those toys the female world admire,
Riches that vex, and vanities that tire.
With added years if life bring nothing new,
But, like a sieve, let ev'ry blessing through,
Some joy still lost, as each vain year runs o'er,
And all we gain, some sad reflection more;
Is that a birthday? 'tis, alas! too clear,
'Tis but the fun'ral of the former year.

Let joy or ease, let affluence or content,
And the gay conscience of a life well spent,
Calm ev'ry thought, inspirit ev'ry grace,
Glow in thy heart, and smile upon thy face.
Let day improve on day, and year on year,
Without a pain, a trouble, or a fear;
Till death unfelt that tender frame destroy,
In some soft dream, or extasy of joy,
Peaceful sleep out the Sabbath of the tomb,
And wake to raptures in a life to come.

From An Essay on Man

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is Man.
Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,
A being darkly wise, and rudely great:

With too much knowledge for the sceptic side,
 With too much weakness for the stoic's pride,
 He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;
 In doubt to deem himself a god, or beast;
 In doubt his mind or body to prefer;
 Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err;
 Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
 Whether he thinks too little, or too much:
 Chaos of thought and passion, all confus'd;
 Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd;
 Created half to rise, and half to fall;
 Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
 Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd;
 The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!

From Moral Essays

I

But what are these to great Atossa's mind?
 Scarce once herself, by turns all woman-kind!
 Who, with herself, or others, from her birth
 Finds all her life one warfare upon earth:
 Shines, in exposing knaves, and painting fools,
 Yet is whate'er she hates and ridicules.
 No thought advances, but her eddy brain
 Whisks it about, and down it goes again.
 Full sixty years the world has been her scene,
 The wisest fool much time has ever made.
 From loveless youth to unrespected age,
 No passion gratified, except her rage.
 So much the fury still outran the wit,
 The pleasure missed her, and the scandal hit.
 Who breaks with her, provokes revenge from hell,
 But he's a wiser man who dares be well.

Her every turn with violence pursued,
 No more a storm her hate than gratitude:
 To that each passion turns, or soon or late;
 Love, if it makes her yield, must make her hate:
 Superiors? death! and equals? what a curse!
 But an inferior not dependent? worse!
 Offend her, and she knows not to forgive:
 Oblige her, and she'll hate you while you live:
 But die, and she'll adore you – then the bust
 And temple rise – then fall again to dust.
 Last night, her lord was all that's good and great:
 A knave this morning, and his will a cheat.
 Strange! by the means defeated of the ends,
 By spirit robbed of power, by warmth of friends,
 By wealth of followers! without one distress,
 Sick of herself through very selfishness!
 Atossa, cursed with every granted prayer,
 Childless with all her children, wants an heir.
 To heirs unknown descends the unguarded store,
 Or wanders, Heaven-directed, to the poor.

II

In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-hung,
 The floors of plaster, and the walls of dung,
 On once a flock-bed, but repair'd with straw,
 With tape-ty'd curtains, never meant to draw,
 The George and Garter dangling from that bed
 Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,
 Great Villiers lies – alas! how chang'd from him,
 That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim!
 Gallant and gay, in Cliveden's proud alcove,
 The bow'r of wanton Shrewsbury and love;
 Or just as gay, at council, in a ring
 Of mimic'd statesmen, and their merry king.

No wit to flatter left of all his store!
 No fool to laugh at, which he valu'd more.
 There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
 And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends.

THOMAS TICKELL

On a Woman of Fashion

'Then, behind, all my hair is done up in a plat,
 And so, like a cornet's, tuck'd under my hat,
 Then I mount on my palfrey as gay as a lark,
 And, follow'd by John, take the dust in Hyde Park.
 In the way I am met by some smart macaroni,
 Who rides by my side on a little bay pony –
 No sturdy Hibernian, with shoulders so wide,
 But as taper and slim as the ponies they ride;
 Their legs are as slim, and their shoulders no wider,
 Dear sweet little creatures, both pony and rider! ...

'In Kensington Gardens to stroll up and down,
 You know was the fashion before you left town,
 The thing's well enough, when allowance is made
 For the size of the trees and the depth of the shade,
 But the spread of their leaves such a shelter affords
 To those noisy impertinent creatures call'd birds,
 Whose ridiculous chirruping ruins the scene,
 Brings the country before me, and gives me the spleen.

'Yet, though 'tis too rural – to come near the mark,
 We all herd in *one* walk, and that, nearest the park,
 There with ease we may see, as we pass by the wicket,
 The chimneys of Knightsbridge, and – footmen at cricket.

I must though, in justice, declare that the grass,
 Which, worn by our feet, is diminish'd apace,
 In a little time more will be brown and as flat
 As the sand at Vauxhall, or as Ranelagh mat.
 Improving thus fast, perhaps by degrees
 We may see rolls and butter spread under the trees,
 With a small pretty band in each seat of the walk,
 To play little tunes and enliven our talk.'

ALLAN RAMSAY

Ode from Horace

Look up to Pentland's towering tap,
 Buried beneath great wreaths of snaw,
 O'er ilka cleugh, ilk scaur, and slap,
 As high 'as ony Roman wa'.

Driving their ba's frae whins or tee,
 There's no ae gowfer to be seen,
 Nor douser fouk wysing ajee
 The biassed bowls on Tamson's green.

Then fling on coals, and ripe the ribs,
 And beek the house baith but and ben;
 That mutchkin-stoup it hauds but dribs,
 Then let's get in the tappit hen.

Good claret best keeps out the cauld,
 And drives away the winter soon;
 It makes a man baith gash and bauld,
 And heaves his saul beyond the moon.

Leave to the gods your ilka care,
If that they think us worth their while;
They can a rowth of blessings spare,
Which will our fashous fears beguile.

For what they have a mind to do,
That will they do, should we gang wud;
If they command the storms to blaw,
Then upo' sight the hailstanes thud.

But soon as e'er they cry, 'Be quiet,'
The blattering winds dare nae mair move,
But cour into their caves and wait
The high command of supreme Jove.

Let neist day come as it thinks fit,
The present minute's only ours;
On pleasure let's empiy our wit,
And laugh at fortune's feckless powers.

Be sure ye dinna quat the grip
Of ilka joy when ye are young,
Before auld age your vitals nip,
And lay ye twafald o'er a rung.

Sweet youth's a blithe and heartsome time;
Then lads and lasses, while it's May,
Gae pu' the gowan in its prime,
Before it wither and decay.

Watch the saft minutes of delight,
When Jenny speaks beneath her breath;
And kisses, laying a' the wyte
On you, if she kep ony skaith.

'Haith, ye're ill-bred,' she'll smiling say;
 'Ye'll worry me, you greedy rook';
 Syne frae your arms she'll rin away,
 And hide hersell in some dark nook.

Her laugh will lead you to the place,
 Where lies the happiness you want,
 And plainly tells you to your face,
 Nineteen naysays are half a grant.

Now to her heaving bosom cling,
 And sweetly toolie for a kiss,
 Frae her fair finger whup a ring,
 As token of a future bliss.

These benisons, I'm very sure,
 Are of the gods' indulgent grant;
 Then surely carles, whisht, forbear
 To plagu: us with your whining cant.

JOHN DYER

From Grongar Hill

See on the mountain's southern side,
 Where the prospect opens wide,
 Where the evening gilds the tide;
 How close and small the hedges lie!
 What streaks of meadows cross the eye!
 A step methinks may pass the stream,
 So little distant dangers seem;
 So we mistake the future's face,
 Eyed through hope's deluding glass;

As yon summits soft and fair,
 Clad in colours of the air,
 Which to those who journey near,
 Barren, brown, and rough appear;
 Still we tread the same coarse way,
 The present's still a cloudy day.

JOHN GAY

The Fable of the Butterfly and the Snail

All upstarts, insolent in place,
 Remind us of their vulgar race.
 As, in the sunshine of the morn,
 A butterfly (but newly born)
 Sat proudly perking on a rose;
 With pert conceit his bosom glows;
 His wings (all-glorious to behold)
 Bedropp'd with azure, jet, and gold,
 Wide he displays; the spangled dew
 Reflects his eyes, and various hue.

His now-forgotten friend, a snail,
 Beneath his house, with slimy trail
 Crawls o'er the grass; whom when he spies,
 In wrath he to the gard'ner cries:

'What means yon peasant's daily toil,
 From choking weeds to rid the soil?
 Why wake you to the morning's care,
 Why with new arts correct the year,
 Why glows the peach with crimson hue,
 And why the plum's inviting blue;

Were they to feast his taste design'd,
 That vermin of voracious kind?
 Crush then the slow, the pilf'ring race;
 So purge thy garden from disgrace.'
 'What arrogance!' the snail replied;
 'How insolent is upstart pride!
 Hadst thou not thus with insult vain,
 Provoked my patience to complain,
 I had conceal'd thy meaner birth,
 Nor traced thee to the scum of earth.
 For scarce nine suns have waked the hours,
 To swell the fruit, and paint the flow'rs,
 Since I thy humbler life surveyed,
 In base, in sordid guise arrayed;
 A hideous insect, vile, unclean,
 You dragged a slow and noisome train;
 And from your spider-bowels drew
 Foul film, and spun the dirty clew.
 I own my humble life, good friend;
 Snail was I born, and snail shall end.
 And what's a butterfly? At best,
 He's but a caterpillar, dress'd;
 And all thy race (a numerous seed)
 Shall prove of caterpillar breed.'

Song from The Beggar's Opera

Cease your funning;
 Force or cunning
 Never shall my heart trapan.
 All these sallies
 Are but malice
 To seduce my constant man.

'Tis most certain,
 By their flirting
 Women oft have envy shown,
 Pleas'd to ruin
 Others wooing;
 Never happy in their own!

Duet from The Beggar's Opera

Were I laid on Greenland's coast,
 And in my arms embrac'd my lass;
 Warm amidst eternal frost,
 Too soon the half year's night would pass.

Were I sold on Indian soil,
 Soon as the burning day was clos'd,
 I could mock the sultry toil
 When on my charmer's breast repos'd.

And I would love you all the day,
 Every night would kiss and play,
 If with me you'd fondly stray
 Over the hills and far away.

RICHARD SAVAGE

From The Bastard

In gayer hours, when high my fancy run,
 The Muse, exulting, thus her lay begun.

Blest be the *Bastard's* birth! thro' won'drous ways
 He shines eccentric like a comet's blaze!
 No sickly fruit of faint compliance He!
 He! stamp'd in Nature's mint of extasy!
 He lives to build, not boast a generous race.
 No tenth transmitter of a foolish face.
 His daring hope, no Sire's example bounds;
 His first-born lights no prejudice confounds.
 He, kindling from within, requires no flame;
 He glories in a *Bastard's* glowing name.
 Born to himself, by no possession led,
 In freedom foster'd, and by fortune fed;
 Nor guides, nor rules, his sov'reign choice controul,
 His body independent, as his soul.
 Loos'd to the world's wide range – enjoyn'd no aim,
 Prescrib'd no duty, and assign'd no name:
 Nature's unbounded son, he stands alone,
 His heart unbiass'd and his mind his own.

HENRY CAREY

Sally in Our Alley

Of all the girls that are so smart,
 There's none like pretty Sally;
 She is the darling of my heart,
 And she lives in our alley.
 There is no lady in the land
 Is half so sweet as Sally:
 She is the darling of my heart,
 And she lives in our alley.

Her father he makes cabbage-nets,
And through the streets does cry 'em;
Her mother she sells laces long,
To such as please to buy 'em:
But sure such folks could ne'er beget
So sweet a girl as Sally!
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

When she is by, I leave my work
(I love her so sincerely),
My master comes like any Turk,
And bangs me most severely:
But, let him bang his belly-full,
I'll bear it all for Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

Of all the days that's in the week,
I dearly love but one day;
And that's the day that comes betwixt
A Saturday and Monday;
For then I'm dressed all in my best,
To walk abroad with Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

My master carries me to church,
And often am I blamed,
Because I leave him in the lurch,
As soon as text is named:
I leave the church in sermon time,
And slink away to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

When Christmas comes about again,
 O then I shall have money;
 I'll hoard it up, and box it all,
 I'll give it to my honey;
 I would it were ten thousand pounds,
 I'd give it all to Sally;
 She is the darling of my heart,
 And she lives in our alley.

My master, and the neighbours all,
 Make game of me and Sally;
 And, but for her, I'd better be
 A slave, and row a galley:
 But when my seven long years are out,
 O then I'll marry Sally,
 O then we'll wed, and then we'll bed,
 But not in our alley.

JAMES THOMSON

From The Seasons: Spring

At last from Aries rolls the bounteous sun,
 And the bright Bull receives him. Then no more
 Th' expansive atmosphere is cramp'd with cold;
 But, full of life and vivifying soul,
 Lifts the light clouds sublime, and spreads them thin,
 Fleecy and white, o'er all-surrounding heaven.
 Forth fly the tepid airs; and unconfin'd,
 Unbinding earth, the moving softness strays.
 Joyous, th' impatient husbandman perceives

Relenting Nature, and his lusty steers
 Drives from their stalls, to where the well-us'd plough
 Lies in the furrow, loosen'd from the frost.
 There, unrefusing, to the harness'd yoke,
 They lend their shoulder, and begin their toil,
 Cheer'd by the simple song and soaring lark.
 Meanwhile incumbent o'er the shining share
 The master leans, removes th' obstructing clay,
 Winds the whole work, and sidelong lays the glebe.

From The Seasons: Autumn

Defeating oft the labours of the year,
 The sultry South collects a potent blast.
 At first, the groves are scarcely seen to stir
 Their trembling tops; and a still murmur runs
 Along the soft-inclining fields of corn
 But as th' aerial tempest fuller swells,
 And in one mighty stream, invisible,
 Immense, the whole excited atmosphere
 Impetuous rushes o'er the sounding world;
 Strain'd to the root, the stooping forest pours
 A rustling shower of yet untimely leaves.
 High-beat, the circling mountains eddy in,
 From the bare wild, the dissipated storm,
 And send it in a torrent down the vale.
 Expos'd and naked to its utmost rage,
 Through all the sea of harvest rolling round,
 The billowy plain floats wide; nor can evade,
 Though pliant to the blast, its seizing force;
 Or whirl'd in air, or into vacant chaff
 Shook waste. And sometimes too a burst of rain,
 Swept from the black horizon, broad, descends

In one continuous flood. Still overhead
 The mingling tempest weaves its gloom, and still
 The deluge deepens; till the fields around
 Lie sunk and flatted in the sordid wave.
 Sudden, the ditches swell; the meadows swim.
 Red, from the hills, innumerable streams
 Tumultuous roar, and high above its banks
 The river lift; before whose rushing tide,
 Herds, flocks, and harvests, cottages and swains,
 Roll mingled down; all that the winds had spar'd
 In one wild moment ruin'd, the big hopes
 And well-earn'd treasures of the painful year.

Song

One day the god of fond desire,
 On mischief bent, to Damon said,
 'Why not disclose your tender fire,
 Not own it to the lovely maid?'

The shepherd mark'd his treacherous art,
 And, softly sighing, thus replied:
 'Tis true, you have subdu'd my heart,
 But shall not triumph o'er my pride.

'The slave in private only bears
 Your bondage, who his love conceals;
 But when his passion he declares,
 You drag him at your chariot-wheels.'

JONATHAN SWIFT

A Description of the Morning

Now hardly here and there a hackney coach
Appearing, show'd the ruddy morn's approach.
Now Betty from her master's bed had flown,
And softly stole to discompose her own;
The slip-shod 'prentice from his master's door
Had pared the dirt and sprinkled round the floor.
Now Moll had whirl'd her mop with dex'trous airs,
Prepared to scrub the entry and the stairs.
The youth with broomy stumps began to trace
The kennel's edge, where wheels had worn the place.
The small-coal man was heard with cadence deep,
Till drown'd in shriller notes of chimney-sweep;
Duns at his lordship's gate began to meet;
And brickdust Moll had scream'd through half the street.
The turnkey now his flock returning sees,
Duly let out a-nights to steal for fees:
The watchful bailiffs take their silent stands.
And schoolboys lag with satchels in their hands.

On the Death of Dr Swift

... The time is not remote when I
Must by the course of nature die;
When I foresee, my special friends
Will try to find their private ends:
And, though 'tis hardly understood
Which way my death can do them good,

Yet, thus, methinks, I hear them speak:
 'See, how the dean begins to break!
 Poor gentleman, he droops apace!
 You plainly find it in his face.
 That old vertigo in his head
 Will never leave him till he's dead.
 Besides, his memory decays:
 He recollects not what he says;
 He cannot call his friends to mind:
 Forgets the place where last he dined;
 Plies you with stories o'er and o'er;
 He told them fifty times before.
 How does he fancy we can sit
 To hear his out-of-fashion wit?
 But he takes up with younger folks,
 Who for his wine will bear his jokes.
 Faith! he must make his stories shorter:
 Or change his comrades once a quarter
 In half the time he talks them round,
 There must another set be found.
 For poetry he's past his prime:
 He takes an hour to find a rhyme;
 His fire is out, his wit decay'd,
 His fancy sunk, his Muse a jade.
 I'd have him throw away his pen;—
 But there's no talking to some men!
 And then their tenderness appears
 By adding largely to my years;
 'He's older than he would be reckoned,
 And well remembers Charles the Second.
 He hardly drinks a pint of wine;
 And that, I doubt, is no good sign.
 His stomach too begins to fail:
 Last year we thought him strong and hale;

But now he's quite another thing:
 I wish he may hold out till spring!
 They hug themselves and reason thus;
 'It is not yet so bad with us!'
 ... My good companions, never fear;
 For, though you may mistake a year,
 Though your prognostics run too fast;
 They must be verified at last.

Behold the fatal day arrive!
 'How is the dean?' – 'He's just alive.'
 Now the departing prayer is read;
 'He hardly breathes.' – 'The dean is dead.'

Before the passing bell begun,
 The news through half the town is run.
 'O! may we all for death prepare!
 What has he left and who's his heir?'
 ... Here shift the scene, to represent
 How those I love my death lament.
 Poor Pope would grieve a month, and Gay
 A week and Arbuthnot a day.
 St John himself will scarce forbear
 To bite his pen and drop a tear.
 The rest will give a shrug, and cry,
 'I'm sorry – but we all must die!'
 ... The fools, my juniors by a year,
 Are tortur'd with suspense and fear;
 Who wisely thought my age a screen,
 When death approach'd, to stand between:
 The screen removed, their hearts are trembling;
 They mourn for me without dissembling.

My female friends, whose tender hearts
 Have better learn'd to act their parts,
 Receive the news in doleful dumps:
 'The dean is dead: (Pray what is trumps?)

Then Lord have mercy on his soul!
 (Ladies, I'll venture for the vole.)
 Six deans, they say, must bear the pall:
 (I wish I knew what king to call.)
 Madam, your husband will attend
 The funeral of so good a friend;
 No, madam, 'tis a shocking sight;
 And he's engaged to-morrow night:
 My lady Club will take it ill
 If he should fail her at quadrille.
 He loved the dean – (I lead a heart).
 But dearest friends, they say, must part.
 His time was come: he ran his race;
 We hope he's in a better place.'
 ... Suppose me dead! and then suppose
 A club assembled at the Rose;
 Where, from discourse of this and that,
 I grow the subject of their chat.
 And while they toss my name about,
 With favour some and some without,
 One quite indifferent in the cause
 My character impartial draws;
 'The dean, if we believe report,
 Was never ill received at court.
 As for his works in verse and prose,
 I own myself no judge of those;
 Nor can I tell what critics thought 'em:
 But this I know, all people bought 'em.
 As with a moral view design'd
 To cure the vices of mankind:
 His vein ironically grave,
 Exposed the fool and lash'd the knave.
 To steal a hint was never known,
 But what he writ was all his own.

'He never thought an honour done him
Because a duke was proud to own him;
Would rather slip aside and choose
To talk with wits in dirty shoes;
Despised the fools in stars and garters,
So often seen caressing Chartres.
He never courted men in station,
Nor persons held in admiration;
Of no man's greatness was afraid,
Because he sought for no man's aid.
Though trusted long in great affairs,
He gave himself no haughty airs:
Without regarding private ends,
Spent all his credit for his friends;
And only chose the wise and good;
No flatterers; no allies in blood:
But succour'd virtue in distress,
And seldom fail'd in good success:
As numbers in their hearts must own,
Who but for him had been unknown.
... 'Perhaps I may allow the dean
Had too much satire in his vein,
And seem'd determined not to starve it,
Because no age could more deserve it.
Yet malice never was his aim;
He lash'd the vice, but spared the name;
No individual could resent,
Where thousands equally were meant.
His satire points at no defect
But what all mortals may correct;
For he abhorr'd that senseless tribe
Who call it humour when they gibe
He spared a hump or crooked nose,
Whose owners set not up for beaux.

True genuine dulness moved his pity,
Unless it offer'd to be witty.

Those who their ignorance confess'd
He ne'er offended with a jest;
But laugh'd to hear an idiot quote
A verse from Horace learn'd by rote.

'He knew a hundred pleasing stories,
With all the turns of Whigs and Tories
Was cheerful in his dying day,
And friends would let him have his way

'He gave the little wealth he had
To build a house for fools and mad;
And show'd by one satiric touch
No nation wanted it so much.
That kingdom he had left his debtor,
I wish it soon may have a better.'

' MATTHEW GREEN

From The Spleen

Thus, thus I steer my bark, and sail
On even keel with gentle gale;
At helm I make my reason sit,
My crew of passions all submit.
If dark and blustering prove some nights,
Philosophy puts forth her lights;
Experience holds the cautious glass,
To shun the breakers, as I pass,
And frequent throws the wary lead,
To see what dangers may be hid:
And once in seven years I'm seen
At Bath or Tunbridge, to careen.

Though pleased to see the dolphins play,
 I mind my compass and my way.
 With store sufficient for relief,
 And wisely still prepared to reef,
 Nor wanting the dispersive bowl
 Of cloudy weather in the soul,
 I make (may heaven propitious send
 Such wind and weather to the end)
 Neither becalmed, nor over-blown,
 Life's voyage to the world unknown.

EDWARD YOUNG

From Night Thoughts: The Christian Triumph

O my coevals! remnants of yourselves!
 Poor human ruins, tottering o'er the grave!
 Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,
 Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,
 Still more enamoured of this wretched soil?
 Shall our pale, withered hands, be still stretch'd out,
 Trembling, at once, with eagerness and age?
 With avarice, and convulsions, grasping hard?
 Grasping at air! for what has earth beside?
 Man wants but little: nor that little, long.
 How soon must he resign his very dust,
 Which frugal nature lent him for an hour!
 Years unexperienc'd rush on numerous ills:
 And soon as man, expert from time, has found
 The key of life, it opens the gates of death.

When in this vale of years I backward look,
 And miss such numbers, numbers too of such,

Firmer in health, and greener in their age,
 And stricter on their guard, and fitter far
 To play life's subtle game, I scarce believe
 I still survive: and am I fond of life,
 Who scarce can think it possible, I live?
 Alive by miracle! or, what is next,
 Alive by Mead! if I am still alive,
 Who long have buried what gives life to live,
 Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought.
 Life's lee is not more shallow, than impure,
 And vapid; sense and reason show the door,
 Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.

From Night Thoughts: The Consolation

All, all is right; by God ordain'd or done;
 And who, but God, resum'd the friends He gave?
 And have I been complaining, then, so long?
 Complaining of His favours; pain and death?
 Who, without Pain's advice, would e'er be good?
 Who, without Death, but would be good in vain?
 Pain is to save from pain; all punishment,
 To make for peace; and death, to save from Death;
 And second death, to guard immortal life;
 To rouse the careless, the presumptuous awe,
 And turn the tide of souls another way;
 By the same tenderness divine ordain'd,
 That planted Eden, and high bloom'd for man,
 A fairer Eden, endless in the skies.

ROBERT BLAIR

From The Grave

The very turf on which we tread once lived;
And we that live must lend our carcasses
To cover our own offspring: in their turns
They too must cover theirs. – 'Tis here all meet!
The shivering Icelfander, and sun-burnt Moor;
Men of all climes, that never met before;
And of all creeds, the Jew, the Turk, the Christian.
Here the proud prince, and favourite yet prouder,
His sovereign's keeper, and the people's scourge,
Are huddled out of sight. – Here lie abash'd
The great negotiators of the earth,
And celebrated masters of the balance,
Deep read in stratagems, and wiles of courts.
Now vain their treaty skill: death scorns to treat.
Here the o'er-loaded slave flings down his burden
From his gall'd shoulders; – and when the cruel tyrant,
With all his guards and tools of power about him,
Is meditating new unheard-of hardships,
Mocks his short arm, – and quick as thought, escapes
Where tyrants vex not, and the weary rest.
Here the warm lover, leaving the cool shade,
The tell-tale echo, and the babbling stream
(Time out of mind the favourite seats of love),
Fast by his gentle mistress lays him down,
Unblasted by foul tongue. – Here friends and foes
Lie close; unmindful of their former feuds.
The lawn-robed prelate and plain presbyter,
Erewhile that stood aloof, as shy to meet,

Familiar mingle here, like sister streams
That some rude interposing rock had split.
Here is the large-limb'd peasant; – here the child
Of a span long, that never saw the sun,
Nor press'd the nipple, strangled in life's porch.
Here is the mother with her sons and daughters;
The barren wife; the long demurring maid,
Whose lonely unappropriated sweets
Smiled like yon knot of cowslips on the cliff,
Not to be come at by the willing hand.
Here are the prude severe, and gay coquette,
The sober widow, and the young green virgin,
Cropp'd like a rose before 'tis fully blown,
Or half its worth disclosed. Strange medley here!
Here garrulous old age winds up his tale;
And jovial youth, of lightsome vacant heart,
Whose every day was made of melody,
Hears not the voice of mirth. – The shrill-tongued shrew,
Meek as the turtle-dove, forgets her chiding.
Here are the wise, the generous, and the brave;
The just, the good, the worthless, the profane;
The downright clown, and perfectly well-bred;
The fool, the churl, the scoundrel, and the mean;
The supple statesman, and the patriot stern;
The wrecks of nations, and the spoils of time,
With all the lumber of six thousand years.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE

'Ode to Memory

Oh Memory! celestial maid!

Who glean'st the flow'rets cropt by time;
And, suff'ring not a leaf to fade,
Preserv'st the blossoms of our prime;
Bring, bring those moments to my mind
When life was new and Lesbia kind.

And bring that garland to my sight,
With which my favour'd crook she bound;
And bring that wreath of roses bright,
Which then my festive temples crown'd;
And to my raptur'd ear convey
The gentle things she deign'd to say.

And sketch with care the Muse's bower,
Where Isis rolls her silver tide;
Nor yet omit one reed or flower,
That shines on Cherwell's verdant side;
If so thou mayst those hours prolong
When polish'd Lycon join'd my song.

The song it 'vails not to recite -

But, sure, to soothe our youthful dreams,
Those banks and streams appear'd more bright
Than other banks, than other streams;
Or, by the soft'ning pencil shown,
Assume they beauties not their own?

WILLIAM SHENSTONE

And paint that sweetly-vacant scene,
When, all beneath the poplar bough,
My spirits light, my soul serene,
I breathed in verse one cordial vow :
That nothing should my soul inspire
But friendship warm and love entire.

Dull to the sense of new delight,
On thee the drooping muse attends ;
As some fond lover, robb'd of sight,
On thy expressive power depends,
Nor would exchange thy glowing lines,
To live the lord of all that shines.

But let me chase those vows away,
Which at Ambition's shrine I made ;
Nor ever let thy skill display
Those anxious moments, ill repaid :
Oh ! from my breast that season rase,
And bring my childhood in its place. .

Bring me the bells, the rattle bring,
And bring the hobby I bestrode,
When pleased, in many a sportive ring,
Around the room I jovial rode ;
E'en let me bid my lyre adieu,
And bring the whistle that I blew.

Then will I muse, and pensive say,
Why did not these enjoyments last ?
How sweetly wasted I the day,
While innocence allow'd to waste !
Ambition's toils alike are vain,
But ah ! for pleasure yield us pain.

WILLIAM COLLINS

The Passions: An Ode for Music

When Music, heav'nly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft to hear her shell,
Throng'd around her magic cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possest beyond the Muse's painting;
By turns they felt the glowing mind,
Disturb'd, delighted, rais'd, refin'd.
Till once, 'tis said, when all were fir'd,
Fill'd with fury, rapt, inspir'd,
From the supporting n.yrtles round,
They snatch'd her instruments of sound;
And as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each, for Madness rul'd the hour,
Would prove his own expressive pow'r.

First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewilder'd laid,
And back recoil'd he knew not why,
Ev'n at the sound himself had made.
Next Anger rush'd, his eyes on fire,
In lightnings own'd his secret stings,
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept with hurried hand the strings.
With woful measures wan Despair
Low sullen sounds his grief beguil'd,

A solemn, strange, and mingled air,
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.
But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delightful measure?
Still it whisper'd promis'd pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail!
Still would her touch the strain prolong,
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She call'd on Echo still thro' all the song;
And, where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at ev'ry close,
And Hope enchanted smil'd, and wav'd her golden hair.

And longer had she sung, — but with a frown,
Revenge impatient rose,
He threw his blood-stain'd sword in thunder down,
And with a with'ring look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe.
And ever and anon he beat
The doubling drum with furious heat;
And tho' sometimes each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity at his side,
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unalter'd mien,
While each strain'd ball of sight seem'd bursting
from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fix'd,
Sad proof of thy distressful state,
Of diff'ring themes the veering song was mix'd,
And now it courted Love, now raving call'd on Hate.

With eyes uprais'd, as one inspir'd,
 Pale Melancholy sat retir'd,
 And from her wild sequester'd seat,
 In notes by distance made more sweet,
 Pour'd thro' the mellow horn her pensive soul:
 And dashing soft from rocks around,
 Bubbling runnels join'd the sound;
 Thro' glades and glooms the mingled measure stole,
 Or o'er some haunted stream with fond delay,
 Round an holy calm diffusing,
 Love of peace, and lonely musing,
 In hollow murmurs died away.

But O how alter'd was its sprightlier tone!
 When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
 Her bow across her shoulder flung,
 Her buskins gem'd with morning dew,
 Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
 The hunter's call to Faun and Dryad known!
 The oak-crown'd sisters, and their chaste-ey'd queen,
 Satyrs and sylvan boys were seen,
 Peeping from forth their alleys green;
 Brown Exercise rejoic'd to hear,
 And Sport leapt up, and seiz'd his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial,
 He with viny crown advancing,
 First to the lively pipe his hand address'd,
 But soon he saw the brisk awak'ning viol,
 Whose sweet entrancing voice he lov'd the best.
 They would have thought who heard the strain,
 They saw in Tempe's vale her native maids,
 Amidst the festal sounding shades,

To some unwearied minstrel dancing,
 While as his flying fingers kiss'd the strings,
 Love framed with Mirth, a gay fantastic round,
 Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound,
 And he amidst his frolic play,
 As if he would the charming air repay,
 Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

O Music, sphere-descended maid,
 Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid,
 Why, goddess, why to us denied?
 Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
 As in that lov'd Athenian bow'r,
 You learn'd an all-commanding pow'r,
 Thy mimic soul, O Nymph endear'd,
 Can well recall what then it heard.
 Where is thy native simple heart,
 Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
 Arise as in that elder time,
 Warm, energetic, chaste, sublime!
 Thy wonders in that godlike age,
 Fill thy recording Sister's page –
 'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
 Thy humblest Reed could more prevail,
 Had more of strength, diviner rage,
 Than all which charms this ragged age,
 Ev'n all at once together found,
 Cecilia's mingled world of sound –

O bid our vain endeavours cease,
 Revive the just designs of Greece,
 Return in all thy simple state!
 Confirm the tales her sons relate!

Ode to Evening

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales;

O nymph reserved, while now the bright-hair'd sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With braid ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed:

Now air is hush'd, save where the weak-ey'd bat
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing,
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum:
Now teach me, maid compos'd,
To breathe some soften'd strain,

Whose numbers stealing thro' thy darkning vale
May not unseenly with its stillness suit,
As musing slow, I hail
Thy genial lov'd return!

For when thy folding star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant hours, and elves
Who slept in flow'rs the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,
And sheds the fresh'ning dew, and lovelier still,
 The pensive Pleasures sweet
 Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and healthy scene,
Or find some ruin 'midst its dreary dells,
 Whose walls more awful stand
 By thy religious gleams.

Or if chill blust'ring winds, or driving rain,
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut,
 That from the mountain's side,
 Views wilds, and swelling floods.

And hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd spires,
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
 Thy dewy fingers draw
 The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his show'rs, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve!
 While Summer loves to sport,
 Beneath thy ling'ring light:

While fallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves,
Or Winter yelling thro' the troublous air,
 Affrights thy shrinking train,
 And rudely rends thy robes.

So long regardful of thy quiet rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
 Thy gentlest influence own,
 And love thy fav'rite name!

THOMAS GRAY

Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard

The Curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such, as wand'ring near her secret bow'r,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude Forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
 Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
 How jocund did they drive their team afield!
 How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
 Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
 Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
 The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
 And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
 Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.
 The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to These the fault,
 If Mem'ry o'er their Tomb no Trophies raise,
 Where thro' the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
 The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
 Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
 Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
 Or Flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
 Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
 Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
 Or wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
 Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
 Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
 And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
 The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
 Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
 And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden that with dauntless breast
 The little Tyrant of his fields withstood;
 Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
 Some Cromwell[•] guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
 The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
 To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
 And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes.

Their lot forbade: nor circumscrib'd alone
 Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd;
 Forbade to wade throug^h slaughter to a throne,
 And shut the gates of mercy on mankind.

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
 To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
 Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
 With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
 Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
 Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
 They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect
 Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
 With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
 Implore the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd muse,
 The place of fame and elegy supply:
 And many a holy text around she strews,
 That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
 This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
 Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
 Nor cast one longing ling'ring look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
 Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
 Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
 Ev'n in our Ashes live their wonted Fires.

For thee, who mindful of th' unhonour'd Dead
 Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
 If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
 Some kindred Spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed Swain may say,
 'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
 Brushing with hasty steps the dew away
 To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
 That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
 His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
 And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
 Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove,
 Now dropping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
 Or craz'd with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

'One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,
 Along the heath and near his fav'rite tree;
 Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
 Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

'The next with dirges due in sad array
 Slow thro' the church-way path we saw him borne.
 Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay,
 Grav'd on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.'

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
 A 'outh to Fortune and to Fame unknown.
 Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
 And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
 Heav'n did a recompense as largely send:
 He gave to Mis'ry all he had, a tear;
 He gain'd from Heaven ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
 Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
 (There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
 The bosom of his Father and his God.

The Bard: a Pindaric Ode

'Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!
 Confusion on thy banners wait,
 Tho' fann'd by Conquest's crimson wing
 They mock the air with idle state.

Helm, nor Hauberk's twisted mail,
 Nor even thy virtues Tyrant shall avail
 To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
 From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears!

Such were the sounds, that o'er the crested pride
 Of the first Edward scatter'd wild dismay,
 As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
 He wound with toilsome march his long array.
 Stout Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless trance:
 To arms! cried Mortimer, and couch'd his quiv'ring lance.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
 Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
 Robed in the sable garb of woe,
 With haggard eyes the Poet stood;
 (Loose his beard, and hoary hair
 Stream'd, like a meteor, to the troubled air)
 And with a Master's hand, and Prophet's fire,
 Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.
 'Hark, how each giant oak, and desert cave,
 Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
 O'er thee, O King! their hundred arms they wave,
 Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
 Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
 To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

'Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
 That hush'd the stormy main.
 Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed:
 Mountains, ye moan in vain
 Modred, whose magic song
 Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-top'd head.
 On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,
 Smear'd with gore, and ghastly pale:

Far, far aloof th' affrighted ravens sail;
 The famish'd Eagle screams, and passes by.
 Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
 Dear, as the light that visits these sad eyes,
 Dear, as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
 Ye died amidst your dying country's cries –
 No more I weep. They do not sleep.
 On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
 I see them sit, they linger yet,
 Avengers of their native land:
 With me in dreadful harmony they join,
 And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.

'Weave the warp, and weave the woof,
 The winding-sheet of Edward's race.
 Give ample room, and verge enough
 The characters of hell to trace.
 Mark the year, and mark the night
 When Severn shall re-echo with affright
 The shrieks of death, thro' Berkley's roofs that ring,
 Shrieks of an agonising King!
 She-Wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs,
 That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled Mate,
 From thee be born, who o'er thy country hangs
 The scourge of Heav'n. What Terrors round him wait!
 Amazement in his van, with Flight combined,
 And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

'Mighty Victor! thy Lord!
 Low on his funeral couch he lies!
 No pitying heart, no eye, afford
 A tear to grace his obsequies.
 Is the sable Warrior fled?

Thy son is gone. He rests among the Dead
 The Swarm, that in thy noon-tide beam were born?
 Gone to salute the rising Morn.
 Fair laughs the Morn, and soft the Zephyr blows,
 While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
 In gallant trim the gilded Vessel goes;
 Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;
 Regardless of the sweeping Whirlwind's sway,
 'I hat, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

'Fill high the sparkling bowl,
 The rich repast prepare,
 Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:
 Close by the regal chair '
 Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
 A baleful smile upon their baffled Guest.
 Heard ye the din of battle bray,
 Lance to lance, and horse to horse?
 Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
 And thro' the kindred squadrons mow their way.
 Ye Towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
 With many a foul and midnight murder fed,
 Revere his Consort's faith, his Father's fame,
 And spare the meek Usurper's holy head.
 Above, below, the rose of snow,
 Twined with her blushing foe, we spread:
 The bristled Boar in infant gore
 Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
 Now, Brothers, bending o'er th' accursed loom
 Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

'Edward, lo! to sudden fate
 (Weave we the woof. The thread is spun)

Half of thy heart we consecrate.

(The web is wove. The work is done.)'

'Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn

Leave me unblest'd, unpitied, here to mourn:

In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,

They melt, they vanish from my eyes.

But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height

Descending slow their glitt'ring skirts unroll?

Visions of glory, spare my aching sight,

Ye unborn Ages, crowd not on my soul!

No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.

All hail, ye genuine Kings, Britannia's Issue, hail!

'Girt with many a Baron bold

Sublime their starry fronts they rear;

And gorgeous Dames, and Statesmen old

In bearded majesty, appear.

In the midst a Form divine!

Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-Line;

Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face,

Attemper'd sweet to virgin-grace.

What strings symphonious tremble in the air,

What strains of vocal transport round her play!

Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear,

They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.

Bright Rapture calls, and soaring, as she sings,

Waves in the eye of Heav'n her many-colour'd wings.

'The verse adorn again

Fierce War, and faithful Love,

And Truth severe, by fairy Fiction dress'd.

In buskin'd measures move

Pale Grief, and pleasing Pain,

With Horror, Tyrant of the throbbing breast,
 A Voice, as of the Cherub-Choir,
 Gales from blooming Eden bear;
 And distant warblings lesson on my ear,
 That lost in long futurity expire.
 Fond impious Man, think'st thou, on sanguine cloud,
 Rais'd by thy breath, has quench'd the Orb of day?
 To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
 And warms the nations with redoubled ray,
 Enough for me: With joy I see
 The different doom our Fates assign.
 Be thine Despair, and scept' red Care,
 To triumph, and to die, are mine.'
 He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
 Deep in the roaring tide he plung'd to endless night.

*On the Death of a Favourite Cat, drowned in a
 China Tub of Gold Fishes*

'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
 Where China's gayest art had dy'd
 The azure flowers, that blow;
 Demurest of the tabby kind,
 The pensive Selima reclin'd,
 Gazed on the lake below.

 Her conscious tail her joy declar'd;
 The fair round face, the snowy beard,
 The velvet of her paws,
 Her coat, that with the tortoise vies,
 Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
 She saw; and purr'd applause.

Still had she gaz'd; but 'midst the tide
 Two angel forms were seen to glide,
 The Genii of the stream:
 Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue
 Thro' richest purple to the view
 Betray'd a golden gleam.

The hapless Nymph with wonder saw
 A whisker first and then a claw,
 With many an ardent wish,
 She stretch'd in vain to reach the prize.
 What female heart can gold despise?
 What Cat's averse to fish?

Presumptuous Maid! with looks intent
 Again she stretch'd, again she bent,
 Nor knew the gulf between.
 (Malignant Fate sat by, and smil'd)
 The slipp'ry verge her feet beguil'd,
 She tumbled headlong in.

Eight times emerging from the flood
 She mew'd to ev'ry watery God,
 Some speedy aid to send.
 No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd:
 Nor cruel Tom, nor Susan hear
 A Fav'rte has no friend!

From hence, ye Beauties undeceiv'd,
 Know, one false step is ne'er retriev'd,
 And be with caution bold.
 Not all that tempts your wand'ring eyes
 And heedless hearts, is lawful prize;
 Nor all, that glistens, gold.

On a Distant Prospect of Eton College

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,
 That crown the watery glade
 Where grateful Science still adores
 Her Henry's holy Shade;
 And ye, that from the stately brow
 Of Windsor's heights th' expanse below
 Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
 Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
 Wanders the hoary Thames along
 His silver-winding way.

Ah happy hills, ah pleasing shade,
 Ah fields belov'd in vain,
 Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
 A stranger yet to pain!
 I feel the gales, that from ye blow,
 A momentary bliss bestow,
 As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
 My weary soul they seem to soothe,
 And, redolent of joy and youth,
 To breathe a second spring.

• Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen
 Full many a sprightly race
 Disporting on thy margent green
 The paths of pleasure trace,
 Who foremost now delight to cleave
 With pliant arm thy glassy wave?
 The captive linnet which enthrall?
 What idle progeny succeed
 To chase the rolling circle's speed,
 Or urge the flying ball?

While some on earnest business bent
Their murm'ring labours ply
'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint
To sweeten liberty:
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign,
And unknown regions dare descry :
Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possess'd;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast:
Theirs buxom health of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever new,
And lively cheer of vigour born;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
That fly th' approach of morn.

Alas, regardless of their doom,
The little victims play!
No sense have they of ills to come.
Nor care beyond to-day:
Yet see how all around 'em wait
The Ministers of human fate,
And black Misfortune's baleful train!
Ah! show them where in ambush stand
To seize their prey the murd'rous band!
Ah! tell them, they are men!

These shall the fury Passions tear,
 The vultures of the mind,
 Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
 And Shame that skulks behind;
 Or pining Love shall waste their youth,
 Or Jealousy with rankling tooth
 That inly gnaws the secret heart,
 And Envy wan, and faded Care,
 Grim-visag'd comfortless Despair,
 And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
 Then whirl the wretch from high,
 To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,
 And grinning Infamy.
 The stings of Falsehood those shall try,
 And hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,
 That mocks the tear it forc'd to flow;
 And keen Remorse with blood defiled,
 And moody Madness laughing wild
 Amid severest woe.

Lo, in the vale of years beneath
 A grisly troop are seen,
 The painful family of Death,
 More hideous than their Queen:
 This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
 That every labouring sinew strains,
 Those in the deeper vitals rage:
 Lo, Poverty, to fill the band,
 That numbs the soul with icy hand,
 And slow-consuming Age.

To each his suff'rings: all are men,
Condemn'd alike to groan;
The tender for another's pain,
Th' unfeeling for his own.
Yet ah! why should they know their fate?
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies.
Thought would destroy their paradise.
No more; where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise.

SAMUEL JOHNSON

From *The Vanity of Human Wishes*

Once more, Democritus! arise on earth,
With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth;
See motley life in modern trappings dress'd,
And feed with varied fools th' eternal jest!
Thou who could'st laugh where want enchain'd caprice,
Toil crush'd conceit, and man was of a piece:
Where wealth, unloved, without a mourner died;
And scarce a sycophant was fed by pride;
Where ne'er was known the form of mock debate,
Or seen a new-made mayor's unwieldy state;
Where change of favourites made no change of laws,
And senates heard before they judg'd a cause;
How would'st thou shake at Britain's modish tribe,
Dart the quick taunt, and edge the piercing gibe!
Attentive, truth and nature to descry,
And pierce each scene with philosophic eye,

To tice with solemn toys or empty show
The robes of pleasure, and the veils of woe
All aid the farce, and all thy mirth maintain,
Whose joys are causeless, or whose griefs are vain.

One-and-Twenty

Long-expected one-and-twenty,
Ling'ring year, at length is flown:
Pride and pleasure, pomp and plenty,
Great ..., are now your own.

Loosen'd from the minor's tether,
Free to mortgage or to sell,
Wild as wind, and light as feather,
Bid the sons of thrift farewell.

Call the Betsies, Kates, and Jennies,
All the names that banish care;
Lavish of your grandsire's guineas,
Show the spirit of an heir.

All that prey on vice and folly
Joy to see their quarry fly:
There the gamester, light and jolly,
There the lender, grave and sly.

Wealth, my lad, was made to wander,
Let it wander as it will;
Call the jockey, call the pander,
Bid them come and take their fill.

When the bonny blade carouses,
 Pockets full, and spirits high –
 What are acres? What are houses?
 Only dirt, or wet or dry.

Should the guardian friend or mother
 Tell the woes of wilful waste,
 Scorn their counsel, scorn their pother; –
 You can hang or drown at last!

CHARLES CHURCHILL

From The Rosciad

How few are found with real talents blest!
 Fewer with Nature's gifts contented rest.
 Man from his sphere eccentric starts astray:
 All hunt for fame, but most mistake the way.
 Bred at St Omer's to the shuffling trade,
 The hopeful youth a Jesuit might have made,
 With various readings stored his empty skull,
 Learn'd without sense, and venerably dull;
 Or, at some banker's desk, like many more,
 Content to tell that two and two make four;
 His name had stood in City annals fair,
 And prudent Dulness mark'd him for a mayor.

What, then, could tempt thee, in a critic age,
 Such blooming hopes to forfeit on a stage?
 Could it be worth thy wondrous waste of pains
 To publish to the world thy lack of brains?

Or might not reason e'en to thee have shown,
 Thy greatest praise had been to live unknown?
 Yet let not vanity like thine despair:
 Fortune makes Folly her peculiar care.

From Night

A tutor once, more read in men than books,
 A kind of crafty knowledge in his looks,
 Demurely sly, with high preferment bless'd,
 His favourite pupil in these words address'd:—
 Wouldst thou, my son, be wise and virtuous deem'd;
 By all mankind a prodigy esteem'd?
 Be this thy rule; be what men prudent call;
 Prudence, almighty Prudence, gives thee all.
 Keep up appearances; there lies the test;
 The world will give thee credit for the rest.
 Outward be fair, however foul within;
 Sin if thou wilt, but then in secret sin.
 This maxim's into common favour grown,
 Vice is no longer vice, unless 'tis known.
 Virtue, indeed, may barefaced take the field;
 But vice is virtue when 'tis well concealed.
 Should raging passion drive thee to a whore,
 Let Prudence lead thee to a postern door;
 Stay out all night, but take especial care
 That Prudence bring thee back to early prayer.
 As one with watching and with study faint,
 Reel in a drunkard, and reel out a saint.

With joy the youth this useful lesson heard,
 And in his memory stored each precious word;
 Successfully pursued the plan, and now,
 Room for my Lord—Virtue, stand by and bow.

MARK AKENSIDE

From *The Pleasures of Imagination*

When shall the laurel and the vocal string
Resume their honours? When shall we behold
The tuneful tongue, the Promethean hand
Aspire to ancient praise? Alas! how faint,
How slow the dawn of Beauty and of Truth
Breaks the reluctant shades of Gothic night
Which yet involves the nations! Long they groan'd
Beneath the furies of rapacious force;
Oft as the gloomy north, with iron swarms
Tempestuous pouring from her frozen caves,
Blasted th' Italian shore and swept the works
Of Liberty and Wisdom down the gulf
Of all-devouring night. As long immured
In noontide darkness, by the glimmering lamp,
Each Muse and each fair Science piled away
The sordid hours: while foul, barbarian hands
Their mysteries profaned, unstrung the lyre,
And chain'd the soaring pinion down to earth

JAMES BEATTIE

From *The Minstrel*,

Liberal, not lavish, is kind Nature's hand;
Nor was perfection made for man below;
Yet all her schemes with nicest art are plann'd;
Good counteracting ill, and gladness woe.
With gold and gems if Chilian mountains glow;
If bleak and barren Scotia's hills arise;
There plague and poison, lust and rapine grow;
Here, peaceful are the vales, and pure the skies,
And Freedom fires the soul, and sparkles in the eyes.

Then grieve not, thou, to whom th' indulgent Muse
Vouchsafes a portion of celestial fire;
Nor blame the partial Fates, if they refuse
Th' imperial banquet and the rich attire.
Know thine own worth, and reverence the lyre.
Wilt thou debase the heart which God refined?
No; let thy heaven-taught soul to Heaven aspire,
To fancy, freedom, harmony resign'd;
Ambition's grovelling crew for ever left behind.

Canst thou forego the pure ethereal soul
In each fine sense so exquisitely keen,
On the dull couch of Luxury to loll,
Stung with disease, and stupefied with spleen;
Fain to implore the aid of Flattery's screen,
E'en from thyself thy loathsome heart to hide
(The mansion then no more of joy serene),

Where fear, distrust, malevolence abide,
And impotent desire, and disappointed pride?

Oh, how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields?
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven,
Oh, how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven?

WILLIAM FALCONER

From *The Shipwreck*

Fierce and more fierce the gathering tempest grew,
South and by west the threatening demon blew;
Auster's resistless force all air invades,
And every rolling wave more ample spreads:
The ship no longer can her top-sails bear;
No hopes of milder weather now appear.
Bow-lines and halyards are cast off again,
Clue-lines haul'd down, and sheets let fly amain:
Embrail'd each top-sail, and by braces squared,
The seamen climb aloft, and man each yard:
They furl'd the sails, and pointed to the wind
The yards, by rolling tackles then confined,
While o'er the ship the gallant boatswain flies;
Like a hoarse mastiff through the storm he cries –
Prompt to direct th' unskilful still appears,
The expert he praises, and the timid cheers.

Now some, to strike top-gallant-yards attend,
 Some, travellers up the weather-back-stays send,
 At each mast-head the top-ropes others bend:
 The parrels, lifts, and clue-lines soon are gone,
 Topp'd and unrigg'd, they down the backstays run;
 The yards secure along the booms were laid,
 And all the flying ropes aloft belay'd:
 Their sails reduced and all the rigging clear,
 Awhile the crew relax from toils severe;
 Awhile their spirits with fatigue oppress,
 In vain expect th' alternate hour of rest –
 But with redoubling force the tempests blow,
 And watery hills in dread succession flow:
 A dismal shade o'ercasts the frowning skies;
 New troubles grow; fresh difficulties rise;
 No season this from duty to descend,
 All hands on deck must now the storm attend.

JANE ELLIOT

The Flowers of the Forest

I've heard them lilting at our yowe-milking,
 Lasses a-lilting before the dawn of day;
 But now they are moaning on ilka green loaning –
 The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At buchts, in the morning, nae blithe lads are scorning,
 The lasses are lonely, and dowie, and wae;
 Nae daffin', nae gabbin', but sighing and sabbing,
 Ilk ane lifts her leglen and hies her away.

In hairst, at the shearing, nae youths now are jeering,
 The bandsters are lyart, and runckled, and gray;
 At fair, or at preaching, nae wooing, nae fleeching –
 The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At e'en, at the gloaming, nae swankies are roaming
 'Bout stacks wi' the lassies at bogle to play;
 But ilk ane sits drearie, lamenting her dearie –
 The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

Dule and wae for the order sent our lads to the Border!
 The English, for once, by guile wan the day;
 The Flowers of the Forest, that focht aye the foremost,
 The prime o' our land, are cauld in the clay.

We hear nae mair lilting at our yowe-milking,
 Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
 Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning –
 The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

CHRISTOPHER SMART

From A Song to David

O Thou, that sitt'st upon a throne,
 With harp of high, majestic tone,
 To praise the King of kings:
 And voice of heaven, ascending, swell,
 Which, while its deeper notes excel,
 Clear as a clarion rings:

To bless each valley, grove, and coast,
And charm the cherubs to the post
Of gratitude in throngs;
To keep the days on Zion's Mount,
And send the year to his account,
With dances and with songs:

O servant of God's holiest charge,
The minister of praise at large,
Which thou mayst now receive
From thy blest mansion hail and hear,
From topmost eminence appear
To this the wreath I weave.

Great, valiant, pious, good, and clean,
Sublime, contemplative, serene,
Strong, constant, pleasant, wise!
Bright effluence of exceeding grace;
Best man! the swiftness and the race,
The peril and the prize!

Great — from the lustre of his crown,
From Samuel's horn, and God's renown,
Which is the people's voice;
For all the host, from rear to van,
Applauded and embraced the man —
The man of God's own choice.

Valiant — the word, and up he rose;
The fight — he triumphed o'er the foes
Whom God's just laws abhor;
And, armed in gallant faith, he took
Against the boaster, from the brook,
The weapons of the war.

Pious – magnificent and grand,
'Twas he the famous temple plann'd,
 (The seraph in his soul:)
Foremost to give the Lord His ducs,
Foremost to bless the welcome news,
 And foremost to condole.

Good – from Jchudah's genuine vein,
From God's best nature, good in grain,
 His aspect and his heart:
To pity, to forgive, to save,
Witness En-gedi's conscious cave,
 And Shimei's blunted dart.

Clean – if perpetual prayer be pure,
And love, which could itself inure
 To fasting and to fear –
Clean in his gestures, hands, and feet,
To smite the lyre, the dance complete,
 To play the sword and spear.

Sublime – invention ever young,
Of vast conception, towering tongue,
 To God the eternal theme;
Notes from yon exaltations caught,
Unrivalled royalty of thought,
 O'er meaner strains supreme.

Contemplative – on God to fix
His musings, and above the six
 The Sabbath-day he blessed;
'Twas then his thoughts self-conquest pruned,
And heavenly melancholy tuned,
 To bless and bear the rest.

Serene – to sow the seeds of peace,
Remembering, when he watched the fleece,
 How sweetly Kidron purled –
To further knowledge, silence vice,
And plant perpetual paradise,
 When God had calmed the world.

Strong – in the Lord, who could defy
Satan, and all his powers that lie
 In sempiternal night;
And hell, and horror, and despair
Were as the lion and the bear
 To his undaunted might.

Constant – in love to God, the Truth,
Age, manhood, infancy, and youth:
 To Jonathan his friend
Constant, beyond the verge of death;
And Ziba, and Mephibosheth,
 His endless fame attend.

Pleasant – and various as the year;
Man, soul, and angel without peer,
 Priest, champion, sage and boy;
In armour or in ephod clad,
His pomp, his piety was glad
 Majestic was his joy.

Wise – in recovery from his fall,
Whence rose his eminence o'er all,
 Of all the most reviled;
The light of Israel in his ways,
Wise are his precepts, prayer, and praise,
 And counsel to his child ...

WILLIAM JULIUS MICKLE

The Mariner's Wife; or There's Nae Luck about the House

But are ye sure the news is true?
And are ye sure he's weel?
Is this a time to think o' wark?
Ye jauds, fling by your wheel.
Is this a time to think o' wark,
When Colin's at the door?
Rax down my cloak – I'll to the quay,
And see him come ashore.
 For there's nae luck about the house,
 There's nae luck at a',
 There's nae luck about the house,
 When our gudeman's awa'.

Rise up and mak' a clean fireside,
Put on the muckle pot;
Gie little Kate her button gown,
And Jock his Sunday coat.
And mak' their shoon as black as slaes,
Their stockins white as snaw;
It's a' to pleasure our gudeman –
He likes to see them braw.
 For there's nae luck about the house, etc.

Bring down to me my bigonet,
My bishop's satin gown,
For I maun tell the baillie's wife
That Colin's come to town.

My Turkey slippers I'll put on,
 My stockings pearly blue –
 It's a' to pleasure our gudeman,
 For he's baith leal and true.

For there's nae luck about the house, etc.

Sae true his heart, sae smooth his tongue;
 His breath's like caller air;
 His very fit has music in't
 As he comes up the stair.
 And will I see his face again?
 And will I hear him speak?
 I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought:
 In troth I'm like to greet.

For there's nae luck about the house, etc.

THOMAS CHATTERTON

Minstrel's Song

O! sing unto my roundelay,
 O! drop the briny tear with me;
 Dance ho more at holy-day,
 Like a running river be:
 My love is dead,
 Gone to his death-bed,
 All under the willow-tree.

Black his cryne as the winter night,
 White his rode as the summer snow,
 Red his face as the morning light,
 Cold he lies in the grave below:

My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Sweet his tongue as the thristle's note,
Quick in dance as thought can be,
Deft his tabour, cudgel stout;

O! he lies by the willow-tree:

My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Hark! the raven flaps his wing,
In the briared dell below;
Hark! the death-owl loud doth sing
To the night-mares as they go;

My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

See! the white moon shines on high;
Whiter is my true love's shroud,
Whiter than the morning sky,
Whiter than the evening cloud:

My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Here upon my true love's grave,
Shall the barren flowers be laid,
Not one holy saint to save

All the coldness of a maid:

My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

With my hands I'll dent the briars
 Round his holy corse to gree;
 Ouph and fairy, light your fires –
 Here my body still shall be:
 My love is dead,
 Gone to his death-bed,
 All under the willow-tree.

Come, with acorn-cup and thorn,
 Drain my heart's blood away;
 Life and all its goods I scorn,
 Dance by night, or feast by day:
 My love is dead,
 Gone to his death-bed,
 All under the willow-tree.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

From *The Deserted Village*

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
 Where wealth accumulates, and men decay.
 Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
 A breath can make them, as a breath has made:
 But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
 When once destroy'd, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
 When every rood of ground maintain'd its man;
 For him light Labour spread her wholesome store,
 Just gave what life required, but gave no more:
 His best companions, innocence and health;
 And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are alter'd; Trade's unfeeling train
 Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain;
 Along the lawn, where scatter'd hamlets rose,
 Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose;
 And every want to luxury allied,
 And every pang that folly pays to pride.
 Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
 Those calm desires that ask'd but little room,
 Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene.
 Lived in each look, and brighten'd all the green;
 These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
 And rural mirth and manners are no more.

An Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog

Good people all, of every sort,
 Give ear unto my singing;
 And if you find it wondrous short,
 It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man,
 Of whom the world might say,
 That still a godly race he ran,
 Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
 To comfort friends and foes;
 The naked every day he clad,
 When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,
 As many dogs there be,
 Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
 And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends;
 But when a pique began,
 The dog, to gain his private ends,
 Went mad, and bit the man.

Around from all the neighbouring streets
 The wondering neighbours ran,
 And swore the dog had lost his wits,
 To bite so good a man.

The wound it seem'd both sore and sad
 To every Christian eye;
 And while they swore the dog was mad,
 They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
 That show'd the rogues they lied;
 The man recover'd of the bite,
 The dog it was that died.

LADY ANNE BARNARD

Auld Robin Gray

When the sheep are in the fauld, when the kye's come hame,
 When a' the weary warld to quiet rest are gane,
 The woes of my heart fa' in showers frae my ee,
 Unken'd by my gudeman, wha soundly sleeps by me.

Young Jamie loo'd me weel, and sought me for his bride;
 But saving ae crown-piece, he'd naething else beside.
 To make the crown a pound, my Jamie gaed to sea;
 And the crown and the pound, Oh! they were baith for me!

Before he had been gane a twelvemonth and a day,
My father brak his arm, our cow was stown away;
My mither she fell sick – my Jamie was at sea –
And auld Robin Gray, he came a-courting me.

My father couldna work, my mother couldna spin;
I toil'd day and night, but their bread I couldna win;
And Rob maintain'd them baith, and, wi' tears in his ee,
Said, 'Jenny, O! for their sakes, will you no marry me?'

My heart it said na, and I look'd for Jamie back;
But hard blew the winds, and his ship was a wrack:
His ship it was a wrack! Why didna Jenny dee?
Oh, wherefore am I spared, to cry, Wae is me!

My father argued sair – my mother didna speak,
But she look'd in my face till my heart was like to break:
They gied him my hand, but my heart was in the sea;
And so auld Robin Gray, he was gudeman to me.

I hadna been his wife, a week but only four,
When mournfu' as I sat on the stane at my door,
I saw my Jamie's ghaist – I couldna think it he,
Till he said, 'I'm come hame, love, to marry thee!'

O sair, sair did we greet, and mickle say of a';
Ae kiss we took, nae mair – I bad him gang awa.
I wish that I were dead, but I'm no like to dee;
For O, I am but young to cry out, Wae is me!

I gang like a ghaist, and I carena much to spin;
I darena think o' Jamie, for that wad be a sin.
But I will do my best a gude wife aye to be,
For auld Robin Gray, O! he is sae kind to me.

JOHN ARMSTRONG

From *The Art of Preserving Health*

Prompted by instinct's never-erring power,
Each creature knows its proper aliment;
But man, th' inhabitant of every clime,
With all the commoners of Nature feeds.
Directed, bounded, by this power within,
Their cravings are well-aimed: voluptuous man
Is by superior faculties misled;
Misled from pleasure even in quest of joy.
Sated with Nature's boons, what thousands seek,
With dishes tortured from their native taste,
And mad variety, to spur beyond
Its wiser will the jaded appetite!
Is this for pleasure? Learn a juster taste;
And know that temperance is true luxury.
Or is it pride? Pursue some nobler aim.
Dismiss your parasites, who praise for hire;
And earn the fair esteem of honest men,
Whose praise is fame. Form'd of such clay as yours,
The sick, the needy, shiver at your gates.
Even modest want may bless your hand unseen,
Though hush'd in patient wretchedness at home.
Is there no virgin, graced with every charm
But that which binds the mercenary vow;
No youth of genius, whose neglected bloom
Unfoster'd sickens in the barren shade;
No worthy man, by fortune's random blows,
Or by a heart too generous and humane,
Constrain'd to leave his happy natal seat,

And sigh for wants more bitter than his own?
There are, while human miseries abound,
A thousand ways to waste superfluous wealth,
Without one fool or flatterer at your board,
Without one hour of sickness or disgust.

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

Song from The School for Scandal

Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen;
Here's to the widow of fifty;
Here's to the flaunting extravagant quean,
And here's to the housewife that's thrifty.
Let the toast pass, —
Drink to the lass,
I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize;
Now to the maid who has none, sir:
Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,
And here's to the nymph with but *one*, sir.
Let the toast pass, etc.

Here's to the maid with a bosom of snow;
Now to her that's as brown as a berry:
Here's to the wife with a face full of woe,
And now to the girl that is merry.
Let the toast pass, etc.

Not let 'em be clumsy, or let 'em be slim,
 Young or ancient, I care not a feather;
 So fill a pint bumper quite up to the brim,
 And let us e'en toast them together.
 Let the toast pass,
 Drink to the lass,
 I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

WILLIAM COWPER

From *The Task* : *The Sofa*

God made the country, and man made the town;
 What wonder, then, that health and virtue, gifts
 That can alone make sweet the bitter draught
 That life holds out to all, should most abound
 And least be threaten'd in the fields and groves?
 Possess ye therefore, ye who, borne about
 In chariots and sedans, know no fatigue
 But that of idleness, and taste no scenes
 But such as art contrives – possess ye still
 Your element; there only ye can shine;
 There only minds like yours can do no harm.
 Our groves were planted to console at noon
 The pensive wanderer in their shades. At eve
 The moonbeam, sliding softly in between
 The sleeping leaves, is all the light they wish –
 Birds warbling all the music. We can spare
 The splendour of your lamps; they but eclipse
 Our softer satellite. Your songs confound
 Our more harmonious notes. The thrush departs
 Scared, and th' offended nightingale is mute.

There is a public mischief in your mirth;
 It plagues your country. Folly such as yours,
 Graced with a sword, and worthier of a fan,
 Has made, what enemies could ne'er have done,
 Our arch of empire, steadfast but for you,
 A mutilated structure, soon to fall.

From The Task : The Time-piece

England, with all thy faults, I love thee still –
 My country! and, while yet a nook is left,
 Where English minds and manners may be found,
 Shall be constrain'd to love thee. Though thy clime
 Be fickle, and thy year most part deform'd
 With dripping rains, or wither'd by a frost –
 I would not yet exchange thy sullen skies,
 And fields without a flower, for warmer France
 With all her vines; nor for Ausonia's groves
 Of golden fruitage, and her myrtle Lowers.
 To shake thy senate, and from heights sublime
 Of patriot eloquence to flash down fire
 Upon thy foes, was never meant my task:
 But I can feel thy fortunes, and partake
 Thy joys and sorrows, with as true a heart
 As any thunderer there. And I can feel
 Thy follies too; and with a just disdain
 Frown at effeminates, whose very looks
 Reflect dishonour on the land I love.
 How, in the name of soldiership and sense,
 Should England prosper, when such things, as smooth
 And tender as a girl, all essenced o'er
 With odours, and as profligate as sweet –
 Who sell their laurel for a myrtle wreath,

And love when they should fight; when such as these
Presume to lay their hand upon the ark
Of her magnificent and awful cause?
Time was when it was praise and boast enough
In every clime, and travel where we might,
That we were born her children. Praise enough
To fill th' ambition of a private man,
That Chatham's language was his mother tongue
And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own.
Farewell those honours, and farewell with them
The hope of such hereafter! They have fall'n
Each in his field of glory; one in arms,
And one in council – Wolfe upon the lap
Of smiling Victory that moment won,
And Chatham, heart-sick of his country's shame!
They made us many soldiers. Chatham still
Consulting England's happiness at home,
Secured it by an unforgiving frown,
If any wrong'd her. Wolfe, where'er he fought,
Put so much of his heart into his act
That his example had a magnet's force,
And all were swift to follow whom all loved.
Those suns are set. Oh, rise some other such!
Or all that we have left is empty talk
Of old achievements, and despair of new.

The Diverging History of John Gilpin

John Gilpin was a citizen
Of credit and renown,
A train-band captain eke was he
Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear,
Though wedded we have been
These twice ten tedious years, yet we
No holiday have seen.

To-morrow is our wedding-day,
And we will then repair
Unto the Bell at Edmonton
All in a chaise and pair.

My sister, and my sister's child,
Myself and children three,
Will fill the chaise; so you must ride
On horseback after we.

He soon replied, I do admire
Of womankind 'ut one,
And you are she, my dearest dear, •
Therefore it shall be done

I am a linen-draper bold,
As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the Callender
Will lend his horse to go.

Quoth Mistress Gilpin, That's well said;
And for that wine is dear,
We will be furnish'd with our own,
Which is both bright and clear.

John Gilpin kiss'd his loving wife;
O'erjoy'd was he to find
That, though on pleasure she was bent,
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
But yet was not allow'd
To drive up to the door, lest all
Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stay'd,
Where they did all get in;
Six precious souls, and all agog
To dash through thick and thin.

Smack! went the whip, round went the wheels.
Were never folk so glad;
The stones did rattle underneath,
As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse's side
Seized fast the flowing mane,
And up he got, in haste to ride,
But soon came down again;

For saddle-tree scarce reach'd had he,
His journey to begin,
When, turning round his head, he saw
Three customers come in.

So down he came; for loss of time,
Although it grieved him sore,
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,
Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the customers
Were suited to their mind,
When Betty screaming came downstairs,
'The wine is left behind!'

Good lack! quoth he – yet bring it me,
My leathern belt likewise,
In which I bear my trusty sword,
When I do exercise.

Now Mistress Gilpin (careful soul!)
Had two stone bottles found,
To hold the liquor that she loved,
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
Through which the belt he drew,
And hung a bottle on each side,
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be
Equipp'd from top to toe,
His long red cloak, well brush'd and neat,
He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again
Upon his nimble steed,
Full slowly pacing o'er the stones
With caution and good heed!

But, finding soon a smoother road
Beneath his well-shod feet,
The snorting beast began to trot,
Which gall'd him in his seat.

So Fair and softly, John he cried,
But John he cried in vain;
That trot became a gallop soon,
In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs he must
Who cannot sit upright,
He grasp'd the mane with both his hands,
And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that sort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or naught;
Away went hat and wig;
He little dreamt when he set out,
Of running such a rig.

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
Like streamer long and gay,
Till, loop and button failing both,
'At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern
The bottles he had slung;
A bottle swinging at each side,
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children scream'd,
Up flew the windows all;
And every soul cried out, Well done!
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin – who but he?
His fame soon spread around –
He carries weight! he rides a race!
'Tis for a thousand pound!

And still, as fast as he drew near,
'Twas wonderful to view
How in a trice the turnpike men
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were shatter'd at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,
Most piteous to be seen,
Which made his horse's flanks to smoke
As they had basted been.

But still he seem'd to carry weight,
With leathern girdle braced;
For all might see th' bottle-necks
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington
These gambols he did play,
And till he came unto the Wash
Of Edmonton so gay.

And there he threw the wash about
On both sides of the way,
Just like unto a trundling mop,
Or a wild goose at play

At Edmonton, his loving wife
From the balcony spied
Her tender husband, wondering much
To see how he did ride.

Stop, stop, John Gilpin! – Here's the house!

They all at once did cry;

The dinner waits, and we are tired:

Said Gilpin – So am I!

But yet his horse was not a whit

Inclined to tarry there;

For why? – his owner had a house

Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,

Shot by an archer strong;

So did he fly – which brings me to

The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin, out of breath,

And sore against his will,

Till at his friend the Callender's

His horse at last stood still.

The Callender, amazed to see

His neighbour in such trim,

Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,

And thus accosted him:—

What news? what news? your tidings tell;

Tell me you must and shall –

Say why bareheaded you are come,

Or why you come at all?

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,

And loved a timely joke;

And thus unto the Callender

In merry guise he spoke.

I came because your horse would come :
And, if I well forebode,
My hat and wig will soon be here,
They are upon the road.

The Callender, right glad to find
His friend in merry pin,
Return'd him not a single word,
But to the house went in ;

Whence straight he came with hat and wig :
A wig that flow'd behind,
A hat not much the worse for wear,
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and, in his turn,
Thus show'd his ready wit, —
My head is twice big as yours
They therefore needs must fit.

But let me scrape the dirt away
That hangs upon your face ;
And stop and eat, for well you may
Be in a hungry case.

Says John, It is my wedding-day,
And all the world would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton,
And I should dine at Ware.

So turning to his horse, he said,
I am in haste to dine ;
'Twas for your pleasure you came here,
You shall go back for mine.

Ah, luckless speech and bootless boast!
For which he paid full dear;
For while he spake, a braying ass
Did sing most loud and clear;

Whereat his horse did snort as he
Had heard a lion roar.
And gallop'd off with all his might,
As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig;
He lost them sooner than at first,
For why? — they were too big.

Now, Mistress Gilpin, when she saw
Her husband posting down
Into the country far away,
She pull'd out half-a-crown.

And thus unto the youth she said,
That drove them to the Bell,
This shall be yours when you bring back
My husband safe and well.

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
John coming back again;
Whom in a trice he tried to stop
By catching at his rein;

But, not performing what he meant,
And gladly would have done,
The frighted steed he frightened more,
And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went postboy at his heels,
The postboy's horse right glad to miss
The lumbering of the wheels.

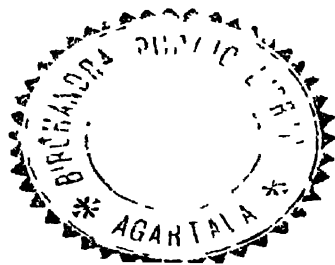
Six gentlemen upon the road
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With postboy scampering in the rear,
They raised the hue and cry:

Stop thief! stop thief! – a highwayman!
Not one of them was mute;
And all and each that pass'd that way
Did join in the pursuit.

And now the turnpike gates again
Flew open in short space,
The tollmen thin'g, as before,
That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,
For he got first to town;
Nor stopp'd till where he had got up
He did again get down.

Now let us sing, I long live the king,
And Gilpin, long live he;
And when he next doth ride abroad,
May I be there to see!



To Mary (Mrs Unwin)

The twentieth year is well-nigh past
Since first our sky was overcast;
Ah, would that this might be the last!
My Mary!

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
I see thee daily weaker grow;
’Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary!

Thy needles, once a shining store,
For my sake restless heretofore,
Now rust disused, and shine no more;
My Mary!

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
The same kind office for me still,
Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary!

But well thou play’dst the housewife’s part,
And all thy threads with magic art
Have wound themselves about this heart,
My Mary!

Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language utter’d in a dream;
Yet me they charm, whate’er the theme,
My Mary!

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
 Are still more lovely in my sight
 Than golden beams of orient light,
 My Mary!

For could I view nor them nor thee,
 What sight worth seeing could I see?
 The sun would rise in vain for me,
 My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,
 Thy hands their little force resign;
 Yet, gently press'd, press gently mine,
 My Mary!

Such feebleness of limbs thou prov'st,
 That now at every step thou mov'st
 Upheld by two; yet still thou lov'st,
 My Mary!

And still to love, though press'd with ill,
 In wintry age to feel no chill,
 With me is to be lovely still,
 My Mary!

But ah! by constant heed I know
 How oft the sadness that I show
 Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
 My Mary!

And should my future lot be cast
 With much resemblance of the past,
 Thy worn-out heart will break at last –
 My Mary!

JOHN WOLCOT ('PETER PINDAR')

Lines on Dr Johnson

I own I like not Johnson's turgid style
That gives an inch the importance of a mile,
Casts of manure a wagon-load around,
To raise a simple daisy from the ground;
Uplifts the club of Hercules – for what?
To crush a butterfly or brain a gnat;
Creates a whirlwind from the earth, to draw
A goose's feather or exalt a straw;
Sets wheels on wheels in motion – such a clatter
To force up one poor nipperkin of water;
Bids ocean labour with tremendous roar,
To heave a cockle-shell upon the shore;
Alike in every theme his pompous art,
Heaven's awful thunder or a rumbling cart!

ROBERT BURNS

O my Luve's like a Red, Red Rose

O my Luve's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June.
O my Luve's like the melody
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will love thee still, my Dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my Dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun:
I will love thee still, my Dear,
While the sands of life shall run:

And fare thee weel, my only Luve!
And fare thee weel, a while!
And I will come again, my Luve,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile!

To a Mouse

Wee, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,
O what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin and chase thee
Wi' murdering pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken nature's social union,
And justifies that ill opinion,
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
And fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live
A daimen icker in a thrave
 'S a sma request:
I'll get a blessin' wi' the laive,
 And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin'!
And naething now to big a new ane
 O' foggage green,
And bleak December's winds ensuin',
 Baith snell and keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare and waste,
And weary winter comin' fast,
And cozie here, beneath the blast,
 Thou thought to dwell,
Till, crash! the cruel coulter passed
 Out through thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves and stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turned out for a' thy trouble,
 But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
 And cranreuch cauld!

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best-laid schemes o' mice and men
 Gang aft a-gley,
And lea'e us nought but grief and pain
 For promised joy.

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!
 The present only toucheth thee:
 But och! I backward cast my e'e
 On prospects drear!
 And forward, though I canna see,
 I guess and fear.

Air from The Jolly Beggars

Sir Wisdom's a fool when he's fou,
 Sir Knave is a fool in a session;
 He's there but a 'prentice I trow,
 But I am a fool by profession.

My grannie she bought me a beuk,
 And I held awa' to the school;
 I fear I my talent misteuk,
 But what will ye hae o' a fool?

For drink I would venture my neck,
 A hizzie's the half o' my craft,
 But what could ye other expect
 Of ane that's avowedly daft?

I ance was tied up in a stirk,
 For civilly swearing and quaffin';
 I ance was abused in the kirk,
 For touzling a lass i' my claffing.

Poor Andrew that tumbles for sport,
 Let naeboddy name wi' a jeer;
 There's even, I'm tauld, i' the court
 A tumbler ca'd the Premier.

Observed ye yon reverend lad
 Maks faces to tickle the mob;
 He rails at our mountebank squad —
 It's rivalryship just i' the job.

And now my conclusion I'll tell,
 For faith I'm confoundedly dry,
 The chiel that's a fool for himsel',
 Gude L——! he's far dafter than I.

Song and Chorus from The Jolly Beggars

See! the smoking bowl before us!
 Mark our jovial ragged ring!
 Round and round take up the chorus,
 And in raptures let us sing.

A fig for those by law protected!
 Liberty's a glorious feast!
 Courts for cowards were erected,
 Churches built to please the priest.

What is title? what is treasure?
 What is reputation's care?
 If we lead a life of pleasure,
 'Tis no matter how or where!
 A fig, etc.

With the ready trick and fable,
 Round we wander all the day;
 And at night, in barn or stable,
 Hug our doxies on the hay.
 A fig, etc.

Does the train-attended carriage
 Through the country lighter rove?
 Does the sober bed of marriage
 Witness brighter scenes of love?
 A fig, etc.

Life is all a variorum,
 We regard not how it goes;
 Let them cant about decorum
 Who have characters to lose.
 A fig, etc.

Here's to budgets, bags, and wallets!
 Here's to all the wandering train!
 Here's our ragged brats and callets!
 One and all cry out – Amen!

A fig for those by law protected!
 Liberty's a glorious feast!
 Courts for cowards were erected,
 Churches built to please the priest.

I Hae a Wife o' My Ain

I hae a wife o' my ain,
 I'll partake wi' naebody:
 I'll tak cuckold frae nane,
 I'll gie cuckold to naebody.

I hae a penny to spend,
 There – thanks to naebody,
 I hae naething to lend,
 I'll borrow frae naebody.

BURNS • BLAKE

I am naeboddy's lord,
I'll be slave to naeboddy,
I hae a gude braid sword,
I'll tak dunts frae naeboddy.

I'll be merry and free,
I'll be sad for naeboddy,
If naeboddy care for me,
I'll care for naeboddy.

WILLIAM BLAKE

Introduction to Songs of Experience

Hear the voice of the Bard!
Who present, past, and future, sees:
Whose ears have heard
The Holy Word
That walk'd among the ancient trees,

Calling the lapsèd soul,
And weeping in the evening dew;
That might control
The starry pole,
And fallen, fallen light renew!

'O Earth, O Earth, return!
Arise from out the dewy grass;
Night is worn,
And the morn
Rises from the slumberous mass.

'Turn away no more:
Why wilt thou turn away?
The starry floor,
The wat'ry shore,
Is giv'n thee till the break of day.'

A Divine Image

Cruelty has a human heart,
And Jealousy a human face;
Terror the human form divine,
And Secrecy the human dress.

The human dress is forged iron,
The human form a fiery forge,
The human face a furnace seal'd,
The human heart is hungry gorge.

The Tiger

Tiger, Tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand, or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry

In what distant deeps, or skies,
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?

And, when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? What dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee?

A Dream

Once a dream did weave a shade
O'er my angel-guarded bed,
That an emmet lost its way
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled, 'wilder'd, and forlorn,
Dark, benighted, travel-worn,
Over many a tangled spray,
All heart-broke I heard her say:

'O, my children! do they cry?
Do they hear their father sigh?
Now they look abroad to see:
Now return and weep for me.'

Pitying, I dropp'd a tear:
But I saw a glow-worm near,
Who replied: 'What wailing wight
Calls the watchman of the night?

'I am set to light the ground,
While the beetle goes his round:
Follow now the beetle's hum;
Little wanderer, hie thee home.'

From *Milton*

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green:
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark Satanic Mills?

Bring me my Bow of burning gold!
Bring me my Arrows of desire!
Bring me my Spear: O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my Chariot of fire!

I will not cease from Mental Fight,
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant Land.

Opening lines of *The Everlasting Gospel*

The vision of Christ that thou dost see
Is my vision's greatest enemy:
Thine is the friend of all mankind,

Mine speaks in parables to the blind:
 Thine loves the same world that mine hates,
 Thy heaven doors are my hell gates,
 Socrates taught what Meletus
 Loath'd as a nation's bitterest curse,
 And Caiaphas was in his own mind
 A benefactor to mankind:
 Both read the bible day and night;
 But thou read'st black where I read white.

Epilogue to The Gates of Paradise

Truly, my Satan, thou art but a dunce,
 And dost not know the garment from the man.
 Every harlot was a virgin once,
 Nor can'st thou ever change Kate into Nan.
 Tho' thou art worship'd by the names divine
 Of Jesus and Jehovah, thou art still
 The son of morn in weary night's decline,
 The lost traveller's dream under the hill.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

PART I

An ancient
 Mariner
 meeteth three
 gallants bidden
 to a wedding
 feast, and
 detaineth one.

It is an ancient Mariner,
 And he stoppeth one of three.
 'By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
 Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

'The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
'There was a ship,' quoth he.
'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!'
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye –
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding
Guest is spell-
bound by the
eye of the old
seafaring man
and
constrained to
hear his tale.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

'The ship was cheer'd, the harbour clear'd,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

The Mariner
tells how the
ship sailed
southward
with a good
wind and fair
weather, till it
reached the
Line.

'The Sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

'Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon –'
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The Wedding-Guest
heareth the bridal
music; but the Mariner
continueth his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The ship
driven by a
storm toward
the South
Pole.

'And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

'With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roar'd the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

The land of
ice, and of
fearful sounds,
where no
living thing
was to be seen.

'And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken –
The ice was all between.

'The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It crack'd and growl'd, and roar'd and howl'd,
Like noises in a swound!

'At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hail'd it in God's name.

Till a great
sea-bird,
called the
Albatross,
came through
the snow-fog,
and was
received with
great joy and
hospitality.

'It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steer'd us through!

'And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

And lo! the
Albatross
proveh a
bird of good
omen, and
followeth the
ship as it
returned
northward
through fog
and floating

'In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine.

"God save thee, ancient Mariner,
From the fiends, that plague thee thus! –
Why look'st thou so?" – With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.

The ancient
Mariner in-
hospitably
killeth the
pious bird of
good omen.

PART II

'The Sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

'And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo!

His ship-
mates cry out
against the
ancient
Mariner for
killing the
bird of good
luck.

'And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averr'd I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

But when the
fog cleared
off, they
justify the
same, and
thus make
themselves
accomplices in
the crime.

'Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
'Then all averr'd I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze
continues; the
ship enters the
Pacific Ocean,
& sails north-
ward, even till
it reaches the
Line.

The ship hath
been suddenly
becalmed.

'The fair Breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow follow'd free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

'Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be,
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

'All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

'Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

'Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink:
Water, water everywhere
Nor any drop to drink.

And the
Albatross
begins to be
avenged.

'The very deep did rot: O Christ!
'That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

'About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

'And some in dreams assurèd were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had follow'd us
From the land of mist and snow.

A Spirit had
followed
them, one of
the invisible
inhabitants of
this planet,
neither de-

parted souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

'And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was wither'd at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

'Ah! well a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

The ship-
mates in their
sore distress,
would fain
throw the
whole guilt
on the ancient

Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

PART III

'There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parch'd, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye!
When, looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

The ancient
Mariner
beholdeth a
sign in the
element afar
off.

'At first it seem'd a little speck,
And then it seem'd a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

'A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it near'd and near'd:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged, and tack'd and veer'd.

At its nearer
approach, it
seemeth him
to be a ship;
and at a dear
ransom he
freeth his
speech from
the bonds of
thirst.

'With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I suck'd the blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

A flash of joy;

'With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

And horror
follows. For
can it be a
ship that
comes onward
without wind
or tide?

'See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal –
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

'The western wave was all aflame.
 The day was wellnigh done!
 Almost upon the western wave
 Rested the broad, bright Sun;
 When that strange shape drove suddenly
 Betwixt us and the Sun.

'And straight the Sun was fleck'd with bars,
 (Heaven's Mother send us grace!),
 As if through a dungeon-grate he peer'd
 With broad and burning face.

It seemeth
 him but the
 skeleton of a
 ship.

'Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
 How fast she nears and nears!
 Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
 Like restless gossameres?

And its ribs
 are seen as
 bars on the
 face of the
 setting Sun.

'Are those her ribs through which the Sun
 Did peer, as through a grate?
 And is that Woman all her crew?
 Is that a Death? and are there two?
 Is Death that woman's mate?

The Spectre-
 Woman and
 her Death-
 mate, and no
 other, on
 board the
 skeleton ship.
 Like vessel
 like crew!

'Her lips were red, her looks were free,
 Her locks were yellow as gold:
 Her skin was as white as leprosy,
 The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she,
 Who thicks man's blood with cold.

Death and
 Life-in-
 Death have
 diced for the
 ship's crew,
 and she (the
 latter) win-
 neth the
 ancient
 Mariner.

'The naked hulk alongside came,
 And the twain were casting dice;
 "The game is done! I've won! I've won!"
 Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

No twilight
within the
courts of the
Sun.

'The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

At the rising
of the Moon.

'We listen'd and look'd sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seem'd to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleam'd white;
From the sails the dew did drip –
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The hornèd Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after
another.

'One after one, by the star-dogg'd Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turn'd his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

His ship-
mates drop
down dead.

'Four times fifty living men
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropp'd down one by one.

But Life-in-
Death begins
her work on
the ancient
Mariner.

'The souls did from their bodies fly –
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it pass'd me by
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!

PART IV

The
Wedding-
Guest
feareth that
a Spirit is
talking to
him;

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribb'd sea-sand.

'I fear thee, and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand so brown.' –
'Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropt not down.

But the
ancient
Mariner
assureth him
of his bodily
life, and pro-
ceedeth to
relate his
horrible
penance.

'Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

'The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

He despiseth
the creatures
of the calm

'I look'd upon the rotting . . . ,
And drew my eyes away;
I look'd upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

And envieth
that they
should live,
and so many
lie dead.

'I look'd to heaven and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

'I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
But the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky,
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse
liveth for him
in the eye of
the dead men.

'The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they look'd on me
Had never pass'd away.

'An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

In his loneliness and
fixedness he
yearneth
towards the
journeying
Moon, and
the stars that
still sojourn,
yet still move
onward; and
everywhere
the blue sky
belongs to
them, and is

'The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside –

'Her beams bemock'd the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt away
A still and awful red.

rest and their native country and their own natural homes,
which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and
yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

By the light
of the Moon
he beholdeth
God's
creatures of
the great
calm.

'Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they rear'd, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

'Within the shadow of the ship
I watch'd their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,

They coil'd and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

'O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gush'd from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware;
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I bless'd them unaware.

Their beauty
and their
happiness.

He blesseth
them in his
heart.

'The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea. •

The spell
begins to
break.

PART V

'O sleep! It is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

'The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remain'd,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew,
And when I awoke, it rain'd.

By grace of
the holy
Mother, the
ancient
Mariner is
refreshed with
rain.

'My lips were wet, my throat was cold.
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

'I moved, and could not feel my limbs;
 I was so light – almost
 I thought that I had died in sleep,
 And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth
 sounds and
 seeth strange
 sights and
 commotions
 in the sky and
 the element.

'And soon I heard a roaring wind:
 It did not come anear;
 But with its sound it shook the sails,
 That were so thin and sere.

'The upper air burst into life;
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen;
 To and fro they were hurried about!
 And to and fro, and in and out,
 The wan stars danced between.

'And the coming wind did roar more loud,
 And the sails did sigh like sedge;
 And the rain pour'd down from one black cloud;
 The Moon was at its edge.

'The duck black cloud was cleft, and still
 The Moon was at its side:
 Like waters shot from some high crag,
 The lightning fell with never a jag,
 A river steep and wide.

The bodies of
 the ship's
 crew are in-
 spired, and the
 ship moves on;

'The loud wind never reach'd the ship,
 Yet now the ship moved on!
 Beneath the lightning and the Moon
 The dead men gave a groan.

'They groan'd, they stirr'd, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

'The helmsman steer'd, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up-blew,
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools –
We were a ghastly crew.

'The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pull'd at one rope,
But he said naught to me.'

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
'Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

'For when it dawn'd – they dropp'd their arms,
And cluster'd round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies pass'd.

But not by
the souls of
the men, nor
by demons of
earth or
middle air, but
by a blessed
troop of
angelic
spirits, sent
down by the
invocation of
the guardian
saint.

'Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mix'd, now one by one.

'Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the skylark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seem'd to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

'And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the Heavens be mute.

'It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

'Till noon we quietly sailèd on,
Yèt never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome
Spirit from
the South
Pole carries
on the ship as
far as the
Line, in
obedience to
the angelic
troop, but
still requireth
vengeance.

'Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The Spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

'The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fix'd her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion –
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

'Then like a pawing horse let go,
 She made a sudden bound:
 It flung the blood into my head,
 And I fell down in a swoond.

'How long in that same fit I lay,
 I have not to declare:
 But ere my living life return'd,
 I heard, and in my soul discern'd
 'Two voices in the air.

' "Is it he?" quoth one, "is this the man?
 By Him who died on cross,
 With his cruel bow he laid full low
 'The harmless Albatross.

' "The spirit who bideth by himself
 In the land of mist and sno
 He loved the bird that loved the man
 Who shot him with his bow."

'The other was a softer voice,
 As soft as honey-dew:
 Quoth he, "The man hath penance done,
 And penance more will do."

The Polar
 Spirit's
 fellow-
 demons, the
 invisible in-
 habitants of
 the element,
 take part in
 his wrong;
 and two of
 them relate
 one to the
 other, that
 penance long
 and heavy for
 the ancient
 Mariner hath
 been accorded
 to the Polar
 Spirit, who
 returneth
 southward.

PART VI

First Voice:

' "But tell me, tell me! speak again,
 Thy soft response renewing —

What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the Ocean doing?"

Second Voice:

' "Still as a slave before his lord,
The Ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the moon is cast —

' "If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim,
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him."

The Mariner
hath been
cast into a
trance; for
the angelic
power causeth
the vessel to
drive north-
ward faster
than human
life could
endure.

First Voice:

' "But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?"

Second Voice:

' "The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

' "Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated."

The super-
natural
motion is re-
tarded; the
Mariner
awakes, and
his penance
begins anew.

'I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high;
The dead men stood together.
'All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:

All fix'd on me their stony cyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

'The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never pass'd away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

'And now this spell was snapt: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And look'd far north, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen –
Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turn'd round, walks on
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

The curse is
finally
expiated.

'But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

'It raised my hair, it fann'd my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring –
It mingled strangely with my fears
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

'Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sail'd softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze –
On me alone it blew.

And the an-
cient Mariner
beholdeth his
native
country.

'O dream of joy! is this indeed
The lighthouse top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

'We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray –
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep away.

'The harbour-bar was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

'The rock shone bright, the kirk no less
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steep'd in silentness
The steady weathercock.

'And the bay was white with silent light
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

The angelic
spirits leave
the dead
bodies,

And appear in
their own
forms of light.

'A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were;
I turn'd my eyes upon the deck –
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

'Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

'This seraph-band, each waved his hand
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

'This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart –
No voice, but O, the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

'But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My heart was turn'd perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear

'The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

'I saw a third – I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.



PART VII

'This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with mariners
That come from a far countree.

The Hermit
of the Wood.

'He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve –
 He hath a cushion plump.
 It is the moss that wholly hides
 The rotted old oak-stump.

'The skiff-boat near'd; I heard them talk,
 "Why this is strange, I trow!
 Where are those lights so many and fair,
 That signal made but now?"

Approacheth
 the ship with
 wonder.

"Strange, by my faith!" the Hermit said –
 "And they answer'd not our cheer!
 The planks look warp'd! and see those sails,
 How thin they are and sere!
 I never saw aught like to them,
 Unless perchance it were

"Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
 My forest-brook along;
 When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
 And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
 That eats the she-wolf's young."

"Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look –
 (The Pilot made reply)
 I am a-fear'd," – "Push on, push on!"
 Said the Hermit cheerily.

'The boat came closer to the ship,
 But I nor spake nor stirr'd;
 The boat came close beneath the ship;
 And straight a sound was heard.

'Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reach'd the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

The ship sud-
denly
sinketh.

'Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drown'd
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

The ancient
Mariner is
saved in the
Pilot's boat.

'Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

'I moved my lips – the Pil shrick'd
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And pray'd where he did sit.

'I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laugh'd loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
"Ha! ha!" quoth he, "full plain I see
The Devil knows how to row."

'And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepp'd forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

The ancient
Mariner
earnestly en-
treateth the
Hermit to
shrieve him ;
and the pen-
ance of life
falls on him.

‘ “O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!”
The Hermit cross’d his brow.
“Say quick,” quoth he, “I bid thee say –
What manner of man art thou?”

‘Forthwith this frame of mine was wrench’d
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

And ever and
anon through-
out his future
life an agony
constraineth
him to travel
from land to
land ;

‘Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

‘I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

‘What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark, the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

‘O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea;
So lonely ’twas, that God Himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

'O sweeter than the marriage feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company! —

'To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

'Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

And to teach,
by his own
example,
love and
reverence to
all things
that God
made and
loveth.

'He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.'

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turn'd from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man
He rose the morrow morn.

Opening lines of *Christabel*

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock;
Tu – whit! — Tu – whoo!
And hark, again! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff bitch;
From her kennel beneath the rock
She maketh answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour;
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;
Some say she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?
The night is chilly, but not dark.
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill, the cloud is gray:
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The Conclusion to Part II of *Christabel*

A little child, a limber elf,
Singing, dancing to itself,
A fairy thing with red round cheeks,
That always finds, and never seeks,

Makes such a vision to the sight
As fills a father's eyes with light;
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast
Upon his heart, that he at last
Must needs express his love's excess
With words of unmeant bitterness.
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
Thoughts so all unlike each other;
To mutter and mock a broken charm,
To dally with wrong that does no harm.
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty
At each wild word to feel within
A sweet recoil of love and pity.
And what, if in a world of sin
(O sorrow and shame should this be true!)
Such giddiness of heart and brain
Come seldom save from rage and pain.
So talks as it's most used to do.

Kubla Khan

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossom'd many an incense-bearing tree,
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But O, that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reach'd the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!
The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she play'd,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,

To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

From *Fears in Solitude*

Thankless too for peace,
(Peace long preserved by fleets and perilous seas)
Secure from actual warfare, we have loved
To swell the war-whoop, passionate for war!
Alas! for ages ignorant of all
Its ghastlier workings (famine or blue plague,
Battle or siege, or flight through wintry snows),
We, this whole people, have been clamorous
For war and bloodshed; animating sports,
The which we pay for as a thing to talk of,
Spectators and not combatants! No guess,
Anticipative of a wrong unfelt,
No speculation on contingency,
However dim and vague, too vague and dim
To yield a justifying cause; and forth
(Stuffed out with big preamble, holy names,
And adjurations of the God in Heaven,)
We send our mandates for the certain death

Of thousands and ten thousands! Boys and girls,
 And women, that would groan to see a child
 Pull off an insect's leg, all read of war,
 The best amusement for our morning's meal!
 The poor wretch, who has learnt his only prayers
 From curses, who knows scarcely words enough
 To ask a blessing from his Heavenly Father,
 Becomes a fluent phraseman, absolute
 And technical in victories and defeats,
 And all our dainty terms for fratricide;
 Terms which we trundle smoothly o'er our tongues
 Like mere abstractions, empty sounds to which
 We join no feeling and attach no form!

As if the soldier died without a wound;
 As if the fibres of this godlike frame
 Were gored without a pang; as if the wretch,
 Who fell in battle, doing bloody deeds,
 Passed off to Heaven, translated and not killed;
 As though he had no wife to pine for him,
 No God to judge him! Therefore, evil days
 Are coming on us, O my countrymen!
 And what if all-avenging Providence,
 Strong and retributive, should make us know
 The meaning of our words, force us to feel
 The desolation and the agony
 Of our fierce doings?

Youth and Age

Verse, a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,
 Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee –
 Both were mine! Life went a-maying
 With Nature, Hope and Poesy,
 When I was young!

When I was young? – Ah, woful When!
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly then it flash'd along –
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Naught cared this body for wind or weather
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely! Love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O the joys, that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love and Liberty,
Ere I was old!

Ere I was old? Ah, woful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!
O Youth! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known that thou and I were one;
I'll think it but a fond conceit –
It cannot be that thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd –
And thou wert aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on,
To make believe that thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this alter'd size:
But spring-tide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but thought; so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
 But the tears of mournful eve!
 Where no hope is, life's a warning
 That only serves to make us grieve,
 When we are old!

That only serves to make us grieve
 With oft and tedious taking-leave,
 Like some poor nigh-related guest
 That may not rudely be dismiss,
 Yet hath outstay'd his welcome while,
 And tells the jest without the smile.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, on Re-visiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour. July 13, 1798

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
 Of five long winters! and again I hear
 These waters, rolling from their mountain springs
 With a soft inland murmur. — Once again
 Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
 That on a wild secluded scene impress
 Thought of more deep seclusion; and connect
 The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
 The day is come when I again repose
 Here under this dark sycamore, and view
 These plots of cottage ground, these orchard tufts,
 Which, at this season, with their unripe fruits,
 Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
 'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see

These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines
 Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms,
 Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
 Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
 With some uncertain notice, as might seem
 Of vagrant dwellers⁸ in the houseless woods,
 Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
 The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,
 Through a long absence, have not been to me
 As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
 But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
 Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
 In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
 Felt in the blood and felt along the heart,
 And passing even into my purer mind
 With tranquil restoration:—feelings too,
 Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
 As have no slight or trivial influence⁹
 On that best portion of a good man's life,
 His little, nameless, unremembered acts
 Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
 To them I may have owed another gift •
 Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood
 In which the burthen¹⁰ of the mystery,
 In which the heavy and the weary weight
 Of all this unintelligible world
 Is lightened:—that serene and blessed mood
 In which the affections gently lead us on,—
 Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
 And even the motion of our human blood
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
 In body, and become a living soul:

While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this

Be but a vain belief, yet oh! how oft –
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart –
How oft in spirit have I turned to thee,
O silvan Wye! thou wanderer through the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions sad and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again;
While here I stand, not only with the thought
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment, there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish years,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. – I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,

The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love
That had no need of a remoter charm
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye. — That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed, for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes
The still sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of men:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all that mighty world
Of eye and ear, — both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay;
For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgements, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
To blow against thee: and in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what pleasing thoughts

Of tender joy wilt thou remember me.
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance —
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence — wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love — oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves, and for thy sake!

From *The Prelude : Child'shood and Schooltime*

Far better never to have heard the name
Of zeal and just ambition, than to live
Baffled and plagued by a mind that every hour
Turns recreant to her task; takes heart again,
Then feels immediately some hollow thought
Hang like an interdict upon her hopes.
This is my lot: for either still I find
Some imperfection in the chosen theme,
Or see of absolute accomplishment
Much wanting, so much wanting, in myself,
That I recoil and droop, and seek repose
In listlessness from vain perplexity,
Unprofitably travelling toward the grave,
Like a false steward who hath much received
And renders nothing back.

Was it for this
 That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved
 To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song,
 And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,
 And from his fords and shallows, sent a voice
 That flowed along my dreams? For this, didst thou,
 O Derwent! winding among grassy holms
 Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,
 Make ceaseless music that composed my thoughts
 To more than infant softness, giving me
 Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind
 A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm
 That Nature breathes among the hills and groves?

From *The Prelude : The Conclusion*

Oh! yet a few short years of useful life,
 And all will be complete, thy race be run,
 Thy monument of glory will be raised;
 Then, though (too weak to tread the ways of truth)
 This age fall back to old idolatry,
 Though men return to servitude as fast
 As the tide ebbs, to ignominy and shame
 By nations sink together, we shall still
 Find solace – knowing what we have learnt to know,
 Rich in true happiness if allowed to be
 Faithful alike in forwarding a day
 Of firmer trust, joint labourers in the work
 (Should Providence such grace to us vouchsafe)
 Of their deliverance, surely yet to come.
 Prophets of Nature, we to them will speak
 A lasting inspiration, sanctified
 By reason, blest by faith: what we have loved,

Others will love, and we will teach them how;
Instruct them how the mind of man becomes
A thousand times more beautiful than the earth
On which he dwells, above this frame of things
'(Which, 'mid all revolution in the hopes
And fears of men, doth still remain unchanged)
In beauty exalted, as it is itself
Of quality and fabric more divine.

From *Peter Bell*

He roved among the vales and streams,
In the green wood and hollow dell;
They were his dwellings night and day,
But nature ne'er could find the way
Into the heart of Peter Bell.

In vain, through every changeful year,
Did Nature lead him as before;
A primrose by a river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
'And it was nothing more.

Small change it made in Peter's heart
To see his gentle panniered train
With more than vernal pleasure feeding,
Where'er the tender grass was leading
Its earliest green along the lane.

In vain, through water, earth, and air,
The soul of happy sound was spread,
When Peter on some April morn,

Beneath the broom or budding thorn,
 Made the warm earth his lazy bed.

Ode

*Intimations of Immortality from Recollections
 of Early Childhood*

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
 The earth, and every common sight,
 To me did seem
 Apparell'd in celestial light,
 The glory and the freshness of a dream.
 It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
 Turn wheresoe'er I may,
 By night or day,
 The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

The Rainbow comes and goes
 And lovely is the Rose;
 The Moon doth with delight
 Look round her when the heavens are bare,
 Waters on a starry night
 Are beautiful and fair;
 The sunshine is a glorious birth;
 But yet I know, where'er I go,
 That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
 And while the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound,
 To me alone there came a thought of grief:
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
 And I again am strong:

The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
 And all the earth is gay;
 Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
 And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday;—
 Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
Shepherd-boy!

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
 My heart is at your festival,
 My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel — I feel it all.
 Oh evil day! if I were sullen
 While Earth herself is adorning,
 This sweet May-morning,
 And the Children are culling
 On every side,
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm: —
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
 — But there's a Tree, of many, one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:
 The Pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat:

Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar:
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
 ' And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate, Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size!

See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral;
 And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song
 Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage;
 As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy Soul's immensity;
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind, —
 Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
 On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality

Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
 A presence which is not to be put by;
 To whom the grave
 Is but a lonely bed without the sense or sight
 Of day or the warm light
 A place of thought where we in waiting lie;
 'Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
 'Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
 Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

 O joy! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live,
 That nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive!
 'The thought of our past years in me doth breed
 Perpetual benediction: not indeed
 For that which is most worthy to be blest;
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast
 Not for these I raise
 The song of thanks and praise;
 But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings;
 Blank misgivings of a Creature
 Moving about in worlds not realized,
 High instincts before which our mortal Nature
 Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised:

But for those first affections,
 Those shadowy recollections,
 Which, be they what they may,
 Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
 Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being
 Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
 To perish never:
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
 Nor Man nor Boy,
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy!

Hence in a season of calm weather
 Though inland far we be,
 Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither,
 Can in a moment travel thither,
 And see the Children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
 And let the young Lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound!
 We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May!
 What though the radiance which was once so bright
 Be now for ever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the hour
 Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
 We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind;

In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be;
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering;
 In the faith that looks through death,
 In years that bring the philosophia mind.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
 Forebode not any severing of our loves!
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
 I only have relinquished one delight
 'To live beneath your more habitual sway.
 I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
 'The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
 Is lovely yet;
 'The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
 Do take a sober colouring from an eye
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
 Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
 Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
 'To me the meanest flower that blows can give
 'Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

In London, September, 1802

O Friend! I know not which way I must look
 For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
 'To think that now our life is only drest
 For show; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,

Or groom! – We must run glittering like a brook
 In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:
 The wealthiest man among us is the best:
 No grandeur now in nature or in book
 Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
 'This is idolatry; and these we adore:
 Plain living and high thinking are no more:
 The homely beauty of the good old cause
 Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
 And pure religion breathing household laws.

Upon Westminster Bridge

Earth has not anything to show more fair
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
 A sight so touching in its majesty:
 This City now doth, like a garment, wear
 The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
 Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
 Never did sun more beautifully steep
 In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
 The river glideth at his own sweet will
 Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
 And all that mighty heart is lying still!

King's College Chapel, Cambridge

Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense,
 With ill-matched aims the Architect who planned

Albeit labouring for a scanty band
 Of white-robed Scholars only – this immense
 And glorious Work of fine intelligence!
 Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore
 Of nicely-calculated less or more;
 So deemed the man who fashioned for the sense
 'These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof
 Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells,
 Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
 Lingering – and wandering on as loth to die;
 Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
 That they were born for immortality.

／ *The World is Too Much with Us*

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
 Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
 Little we see in Nature that is ours;
 We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
 This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
 The winds that will be howling at all hours,
 And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
 For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
 It moves us not. – Great God! I'd rather be
 A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

November, 1806

Another year! – another deadly blow!
Another mighty Empire overthrown!
And We are left, or shall be left, alone;
'The last that dare to struggle with the Foe.
'Tis well! from this day forward we shall know
That in ourselves our safety must be sought;
That by our own right hands it must be wrought;
That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low.
O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer!
We shall exult, if they who rule the land
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
Wise, upright, valiant; not a servile band,
Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
And honour which they do not understand.

THOMAS CAMPBELL

Hohenlinden

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed,
Each horseman drew his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neighed,
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven,
Then rushed the steed to battle driven,
And louder than the bolts of heaven
Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stained snow,
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn, but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dur.
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry.

Few, few shall part where many meet!
The snow shall be their winding sheet;
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

From The Lay of the Last Minstrel

Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
 This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned
 From wandering on a foreign strand!
If such there breathe, go, mark him well:
For him no minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.

Coronach

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
 When our need was the sorest.
The font reappearing
 From the raindrops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
 To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
 Takes the ears that are hoary,
 But the voice of the weeper
 Wails manhood in glory.
 The autumn winds rushing
 Waft the leaves that are searest,
 But our flower was in flushing
 When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the cornel,
 Sage counsel in cumber,
 Red hand in the foray,
 How sound is thy slumber!
 Like the dew on the mountain,
 Like the foam on the river,
 Like the bubble on the fountain,
 Thou art gone; and for ever!

ROBERT SOUTHEY

From *The Curse of Kehama*

They sin who tell us Love can die.
 With life all other passions fly,
 All others are but vanity.
 In heaven Ambition cannot dwell,
 Nor Avarice in the vaults of hell;
 Earthly these passions of the earth,
 They perish where they had their birth.
 But Love is indestructible:

Its holy flame for ever burneth,
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth.
Too oft on earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times oppressed,
 It here is tried and purified,
Then hath in heaven its perfect rest :
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest-time of Love is there.

Corston

As thus I stand beside the murmuring stream
And watch its current, memory here pourtrays
Scenes faintly form'd of half-forgotten days,
Like far-off woodlands by the moon's bright beam
Dimly descried, but lovely. I have worn
Amid these haunts the heavy hours away,
When childhood idled through the Sabbath-day ;
Risen to my tasks at winter's earliest morn ;
And when the summer twilight darken'd here,
Thinking of home, and all of heart forlorn,
Have sigh'd and shed in secret many a tear.
Dream-like and indistinct those days appear,
As the faint sounds of this low brooklet, borne
Upon the breeze, reach fitfully the ear.

GEORGE CANNING

A Political Despatch

In matters of commerce, the fault of the Dutch
Is giving too little and asking too much;
With equal advantage the French are content,
So we'll clap on Dutch bottoms a twenty per cent.
Twenty per cent.,
Twenty per cent.,
Nous frapperons Falck with twenty per cent.

The Pilot that Weathered the Storm

If hush'd the loud whirlwind that ruffled the deep,
The sky if no longer dark tempests deform,
When our perils are past, shall our gratitude sleep?
No – here's to the pilot that weather'd the storm.

At the footstool of Power let Flattery fawn;
Let Faction her idol extol to the skies;
To Virtue in humble retirement withdrawn,
Unblamed may the accents of gratitude rise!

And shall not *his* memory to Britain be dear,
Whose example with envy all nations behold?
A Statesman unbias'd by interest or fear,
By power uncorrupted, untainted by gold!

Who, when terror and doubt thro' the universe reigned,
When rapine and treason their standards unfurl'd,
The hearts and the hopes of his country maintained,
And our kingdom preserved midst the wreck of the world!

Unheeding, unthankful, we bask in the blaze,
While the beams of the sun in full majesty shine
When he sinks into twilight with fondness we gaze,
And mark the mild lustre that gilds his decline.

So, Pitt, when the course of thy greatness is o'er,
Thy talents, thy virtues, we fondly recall;
Now justly we prize thee, when lost we deplore;
Admired in thy zenith, but loved in thy fall.

O take, then, for dangers by wisdom repell'd,
For evils by courage and constancy braved,
O take, for the throne by thy counsels upheld,
The thanks of a people thy goodness has saved.

And oh! if again the rude whirlwind should rise,
The dawning of peace should fresh darkness deform;
The regrets of the good and the fears of the wise
Shall turn to the pilot that weather'd the storm.

CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS

The Toper's Apology

I'm often ask'd by plodding souls,
And men of crafty tongue,
What joy I take in draining bowls,
And tippling all night long,
Now, tho' these cautious knaves I scorn,
For once I'll not disdain
To tell them why I sit till morn,
And fill my glass again:

'Tis by the glow my bumper gives
Life's picture's mellow made;
The fading light then brightly lives,
And softly sinks the shade;
Some happier tint still rises there
With every drop I drain –
And that I think's a reason fair
To fill my glass again.

My Muse, too, when her wings are dry
No frolic flight will take;
But round a bowl she'll dip and fly,
Like swallows round a lake.
Then if the nymph will have her share
Before she'll bless her swain –
Why that I think's a reason fair
To fill my glass again.

In life I've rung all changes too, –
Run every pleasure down, –
'Tried all extremes of fancy through,
And lived with half the town;
For me there's nothing new or rare,
Till wine deceives my brain –
And that I think's a reason fair
To fill my glass again.

'Then many a lad I liked is dead,
And many a lass grown old;
And as the lesson strikes my head,
My weary heart grows cold.
But wine, awhile, drives off despair,
Nay, bids a hope remain –
And that I think's a reason fair
To fill my glass again.

'Then, hipp'd and vex'd at Eng'land's state
In these convulsive days,
I can't endure the ruin'd fate
My sober eye surveys;
But, 'midst the bottle's dazzling glare,
I see the gloom less plain –
And that I think's a reason fair
To fill my glass again.

I find too when I stint my glass,
And sit with sober air,
I'm prosed by some dull reasoning ass,
Who treads the path of care;

Or, harder tax'd, I'm forced to bear
 Some coxcomb's friebbling strain –
 And that I think's a reason fair
 To fill my glass again.

Nay, don't we see Love's fetters, too,
 With different holds entwine?
 While nought but death can some undo,
 There's some give way to wine,
 With me the lighter head I wear
 The lighter hangs the chain –
 And that I think's a reason fair
 To fill my glass again.

And now I'll tell, to end my song,
 'At what I most repine;
 This cursed war, or right or wrong,
 Is war against all wine;
 Nay, Port, they say, will soon be rare
 As juice of France or Spain –
 And that I think's a reason fair
 To fill my glass again.

GEORGE CRABBE

From *The Borough*

'Thus by himself compell'd to live each day,
 To wait for certain hours the tide's delay;
 At the same times the same dull views to see,
 'The bounding marsh-bank and the blighted tree,
 'The water only, when the tides were high;
 When low, the mud half-cover'd and half-dry;

'The sun-burnt tar that blisters on the planks,
And bank-side stakes in their uneven ranks;
Heaps of entangled weeds that slowly float,
As the tide rolls by the impeded boat.

When tides were neap, and, in the sultry day,
Through the tall bounding mud-banks made their way,
Which on each side rose swelling, and below
'The dark warm flood ran silently and slow;
'There anchoring, Peter chose from man to hide,
There hang his head, and view the lazy tide
In its hot slimy channel slowly glide;
Where the small eels that left the deeper way
For the warm shore, within the shallows play;
Where gaping mussels, left upon the mud,
Slope their slow passage to the fallen flood; -
Here dull and hopeless he'd lie down and trace
How sidelong crabs had scrawl'd their crooked race;
Or sadly listen to the tuneless cry
Of fishing gull or clanging golden-eye;
What time the sea-birds to the marsh would come,
And the loud bittern, from the bulrush home,
Gave from the salt-ditch side the bellowing boom;
He nursed the feelings these dull scenes produce,
And loved to stop beside the opening sluice;
Where the small stream, confined in narrow bound,
Ran with a dull, unvaried, sadd'ning sound;
Where all, presented to the eye or ear,
Oppress'd the soul with misery, grief, and fear.

From Tales of the Hall

Six years had passed, and forty ere the six,
When time began to play his usual tricks;
The locks once comely in a virgin's sight,
Locks of pure brown, displayed the encroaching white:
The blood, once fervid, now to cool began,
And Time's strong pressure to subdue the man.
I rode or walked as I was wont before,
But now the bounding spirit was no more;
A moderate pace would now my body heat;
A walk of moderate length distress my feet.
I shewed my stranger guest those hills sublime.
But said: 'The view is poor, we need not climb.'
At a friend's mansion I began to dread
The cold neat parlour and the gay glazed bed:
At home I felt a more decided taste,
And must have all things in my order placed.
I ceased to hunt; my horses pleased me less —
My dinner more; I learned to play at chess.
I took my dog and gun, but saw the brute
Was disappointed that I did not shoot.
My morning walks I now could bear to lose,
And blessed the shower that gave me not to choose.
In fact, I felt a languor stealing on;
The active arm, the agile hand, were gone;
Small daily actions into habits grew,
And new dislike to forms and fashions new.

THOMAS MOORE

The Light of other Days

Oft in the stillly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond Memory brings the light
Of other days around me:
The smiles, the tears
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone,
Now dimm'd and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken!
'Thus in the stillly night
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

When I remember all
The friends so link'd together
I've seen around me fall
Like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one
Who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed!
'Thus in the stillly night
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

' LORD BYRON

From *Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte* :

'Tis done – but yesterday a King!
And arm'd with Kings to strive –
And now thou art a nameless thing
So abject – yet alive!
Is this the man of thousand thrones,
Who strew'd our earth with hostile bones,
And can he thus survive?
Since he, miscall'd the Morning Star,
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

Ill-minded man! why scourge thy kind
Who bow'd so low the knee?
By gazing on thyself grown blind,
• Thou taught'st the rest to see.
With might unquestion'd, – power to save
Thine only gift hath been the grave
To those that worshipp'd thee;
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
Ambition's less than littleness!

Thanks for the lesson – it will teach
To after-warriors more
Than high Philosophy can preach,
And vainly preach'd before.
That spell upon the minds of men
Breaks never to unite again,
That led them to adore
Those Pagod things of sabre-sway,
With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

The triumph and the vanity,
The rapture of the strife –
The earthquake voice of Victory,
To thee the breath of life;
The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
Which man seem'd made but to obey,
Wherewith renown was rife –
All quell'd – Dark Spirit! what must be
The madness of thy memory!

The Desolator desolate!
The Victor overthrown!
The Arbiter of others' fate
A Suppliant for his own!
Is it some yet imperial hope
That with such change can calmly cope?
Or dread of death alone?
To die a prince – or live a slave –
Thy choice is most ignobly brave! ...

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
Nor written thus in vain –
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
Or deepen every stain –
If thou hadst died as honour dies,
Some new Napoleon might arise,
To shame the world again –
But who would soar the solar height,
To set in such a starless night?
Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust
Is vile as vulgar clay;

Thy scales, Mortality ! are just
 To all that pass away;
 But yet methought the living great
 Some higher sparks should animate,
 To dazzle and dismay;
 Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make mirth
 Of these, the Conquerors of the earth ...

'So, We'll go no more a Roving'

So, we'll go no more a roving
 So late into the night,
 Though the heart be still as loving,
 And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
 And the soul wears out the breast,
 And the heart must pause to breathe,
 And love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,
 And the day returns too soon,
 Yet we'll go no more a roving
 By the light of the moon.

Prometheus

Titan! to whose immortal eyes
 The sufferings of mortality,
 Seen in their sad reality,
 Were not as things that gods despise;

What was thy pity's recompense?
A silent suffering, and intense;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless.

Titan! to thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot kill;
And the inexorable Heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Fate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die:
The wretched gift Eternity
Was thine -- and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack;
The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appease him tell;
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his Soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

LORD BYRON

Thy godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,*
In the endurance, and repulse
Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse
A mighty lesson we inherit:
Thou art a symbol and a sign
To mortals of their fate and force;
Like thee, Man is in part divine,
A troubled stream from a pure source;

And Man in portions can foresee
His own funereal destiny;
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence:
To which his Spirit may oppose
Itself – an equal to all woes,
And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
Its own concentr'd recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making Death a Victory.

From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*

I speak not of men's creeds – they rest between
Man and his Maker – but of things allow'd,
Averr'd and known, – and daily, hourly, seen –
The yoke that is upon us doubly bow'd,
And the intent of tyranny avow'd,

The edict of Earth's rulers, who are grown
 The apes of him who humbled once the proud,
 And shook them from their slumbers on the throne,
 Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done.

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,
 And Freedom find no champion and no child
 Such as Columbia saw arise when she
 Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and undefiled?
 Or must such minds be nourish'd in the wild,
 Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar
 Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled
 On infant Washington? Has Earth no more
 Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore?

But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime.
 And fatal have her Saturnalia been
 To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime;
 Because the deadly days which we have seen,
 And vile Ambition, that built up between
 Man and his hopes an adamantine wall,
 And the base pageant last upon the scene,
 Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall
 Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst — his second fall.

Yet, Freedom! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
 Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind;
 Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
 The loudest still the tempest leaves behind;
 Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
 Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
 But the sap lasts, — and still the seed we find
 Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North;
 So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

From Don Juan

Between two worlds life hovers like a star,
'Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon's verge
How little do we know that which we are!
How less what we may be! The eternal surge
Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar
Our bubbles; as the old burst, new emerge.
Lash'd from the foam of ages; while the graves
Of empires heave but like some passing waves.

Song from Don Juan

The isles of Greece! the isles of Greece
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos rose, and Phoebus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' 'Islands of the Blest.'

The mountains look on Marathon –
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dream'd that Greece might still be free;
For standing on the Persians' grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sate on the rocky brow
 Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
 And ships, by thousands, lay below,
 And men in nations; — all were his!
 He counted them at break of day —
 And when the sun set, where were they?

And where are they? and where art thou,
 My country? On thy voiceless shore
 The heroic lay is tuneless now —
 The heroic bosom beats no more,
 And must thy lyre, so long divine,
 Degenerate into hands like mine?

'Tis something in the dearth of fame,
 Though link'd among a fetter'd race,
 To feel at least a patriot's shame,
 Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
 For what is left the poet here?
 For Greeks a blush — for Greece a tear.

Must we but weep o'er days more blest?
 Must we but blush? — Our fathers bled.
 Earth! render back from out thy breast
 A remnant of our Spartan dead!
 Of the three hundred grant but three,
 To make a new Thermopylae!

What, silent still? and silent all?
 Ah! no; — the voices of the dead
 Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
 And answer, 'Let one living head,
 But one, arise, — we come, we come!'
 'Tis but the living who are dumb.

In vain — in vain : strike other chords;
 Fill high the cup with Samian wine!
 Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
 And shed the blood of Scio's vine!
 Hark! rising to the ignoble call —
 How answers each bold Bacchanal!

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet;
 Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
 Of two such lessons, why forget
 The nobler and the manlier one?
 You have the letters Cadmus gave —
 Think ye he meant them for a slave?

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
 We will not think of themes like these!
 It made Anacreon's song divine:
 He served — but served Polycrates —
 A tyrant; but our masters then
 Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese
 Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades!
 O that the present hour would lend
 Another despot of the kind!
 Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
 On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
 Exists the remnant of a line
 Such as the Doric mothers bore;
 And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
 The Heracleidan blood might own.

'Trust not for freedom to the Frank, -
 They have a king who buys and sells;
 In native swords and native ranks
 The only hope of courage dwells:
 But Turkish force and Latin fraud
 Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
 Our virgins dance beneath the shade --
 I see their glorious black eyes shine;
 But gazing on each glowing maid,
 My own the burning tear-drop laves,
 To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
 Where nothing, save the waves and I,
 May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
 There, swan-like, let me sing and die:
 A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine --
 Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

From Alastor

There was a Poet whose untimely tomb
 No human hands with pious reverence reared,
 And the charmed eddies of autumnal winds
 Built o'er his mouldering bones a pyramid
 Of mouldering leaves in the waste wilderness: --
 A lovely youth, -- no mourning maiden decked
 With weeping flowers, or votive cypress wreath,

The lone couch of his everlasting sleep:—
 Gentle, and brave, and generous, — no lorn bard
 Breathed o'er his dark fate one melodious sigh
 He lived, he died, he sung, in solitude.
 Strangers have wept to hear his passionate notes,
 And virgins, as unknown he passed, have pined
 And wasted for fond love of his wild eyes.
 The fire of those soft orbs has ceased to burn,
 And Silence, too enamoured of that voice,
 Locks its mute music in her rugged cell.

Ode to the West Wind

I

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
 Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
 Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing.

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
 Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low,
 Each like a corpse within its grave, until
 Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
 (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
 With living hues and odours plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
 Destroyer and preserver; hear, Oh hear!

II

Thou on whose stream, mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning; there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Maenad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst; Oh hear!

III

'Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: Oh hear!

IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

V

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O, wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

Hymn of Pan

I

From the forests and highlands
We come, we come;
From the river-girt islands,
Where loud waves are dumb
Listening to my sweet pipings.
The wind in the reeds and the rushes,
The bees on the bells of thyme,
The birds on the myrtle bushes
The cicale above in the lime,
And the lizards below in the grass,
Were as silent as ever old Tmolus was,
Listening to my sweet pipings.

II

Liquid Peneus was flowing,
And all dark Tempe lay

In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing
 The light of the dying day,
 Speeded by my sweet pipings.
 The Sileni, and Sylvans, and Fauns,
 And the Nymphs of the woods and the waves,
 To the edge of the moist river-lawns,
 And the brink of the dewy caves,
 And all that did then attend and follow
 Were silent with love, as you now, Apollo,
 With envy of my sweet pipings.

III

I sang of the dancing stars,
 I sang of the daedal Earth,
 And of Heaven – and the giant wars,
 And Love, and Death, and Birth, –
 And then I changed my pipings, –
 Singing how down the vale of Macnalus
 I pursued a maiden and clasped a reed
 Gods and men, we are all deluded thus!
 It breaks in our bosom and then we bleed:
 All wept, as I think both ye now would,
 If envy or age had not frozen your blood,
 At the sorrow of my sweet pipings.

Chorus from Prometheus Unbound

Life of Life! thy lips enkindle
 With their love the breath between them;
 And thy smiles before they dwindle
 Make the cold air fire; then screen them
 In those looks, where whoso gazes
 Faints, entangled in their mazes.

Child of light! thy limbs are burning
 Through the vest which seems to hide them;
 As the radiant lines of morning
 Through the clouds ere they divide them;
 And this atmosphere divinest
 Shrouds thee wheresoe'er thou art divinest.

Fair are others; none beholds thee,
 But thy voice sounds low and tender
 Like the fairest, for it folds thee
 From the sight, that liquid splendour,
 And all feel, yet see thee never,
 As I feel now, lost for ever!

Lamp of Earth! where'er thou movest
 Its dim shapes are clad in brightness,
 And the souls of whom thou lovest
 Walk upon the winds with lightness,
 Till they fail, as I am failing,
 Dizzy, lost, yet unbewailing!

•
To a Skylark

Hail to thee, blithe spirit!
 Bird thou never wert,
 That from heaven, or near it,
 Pourest thy full heart
 In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are brightning,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven,
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight,

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody:

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves;

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,
Or triumphal chaunt,
Match'd with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
 Of delightful sound,
 Better than all treasures
 That in books are found,
 Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
 That thy brain must know,
 Such harmonic madness
 From my lips would flow,
 The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

From Adonais: An Elegy on the Death of John Keats

He is made one with Nature: there is heard
 His voice in all her music, from the moan
 Of thunder to the song of night's sweet bird;
 He is a presence to be felt and known
 In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
 Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
 Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
 Which wields the world with never wearied love,
 Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

Sonnet: England in 1817

An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king, —
 Princes, the dregs of their dull race, who flow
 Through public scorn, — mud from a muddy spring, —
 Rulers who neither see, nor feel, nor know,
 But leech-like to their fainting country cling,
 Till they drop, blind in blood, without a blow, —

A people starved and stabbed in the untilled field, –
 An army, which liberticide and prey
 Makes as a two-edged sword to all who wield
 Golden and sanguine laws which tempt and slay;
 Religion Christless, Godless – a book sealed;
 A Senate, – Time's worst statute unrepealed, –
 Are graves, from which a glorious Phantom may
 Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.

Ozymandias

I met a traveller from an antique land
 Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
 Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
 Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
 And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
 Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
 Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
 The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed:
 And on the pedestal these words appear:
 'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
 Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!
 Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
 Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
 The lone and level sands stretch far away.

JOHN KEATS

Opening lines of *Endymion*

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such is 'the sun, the moon,
Trees old, and young, sprouting a shady boon
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season; the mid forest brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences
For one short hour; no, even as the trees
That whisper round a temple become soon
Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,

The passion poesy, glories infinite,
 Haunt us till they L-come a cheering light
 Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,
 That, whether there be slime, or gloom o'ercast,
 They always must be with us, or we die.

Roundelay from Endymion

O Sorrow,
 Why dost borrow,
 The natural hue of health, from vermeil lips? -
 To give maiden blushes
 To the white rose bushes?
 Or, is't thy dewy hand the daisy tips?

O Sorrow,
 Why dost borrow
 The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye? -
 To give the glow-worm light?
 Or, on a moonless night,
 To tinge, on syren shores, the salt sea-spray?

O Sorrow,
 Why dost borrow
 The mellow ditties from a mourning tongue? -
 To give at evening pale
 Unto the nightingale,
 That thou mayst listen the cold dews among?

O Sorrow,
Why dost borrow
Heart's lightness from the merriment of May? –
A lover would not tread
A cowslip on the head,
Though he should dance from eve till peep of day –
Nor any drooping flower
Held sacred for thy bower,
Wherever he may sport himself and play.

To Sorrow,
I bade good-morrow,
And thought to leave her far away behind;
But cheerly, cheerly,
She loves me dearly;
She is so constant to me, and so kind:
I would deceive her
And so leave her,
But ah! she is so constant and so kind.

Beneath my palm trees, by the river side,
I sat a weeping: in the whole world wide
There was no one to ask me why I wept, –
And so I kept
Brimming the water-lily cups with tears
Cold as my fears.

Beneath my palm trees, by the river side,
I sat a weeping: what enamour'd bride,
Cheated by shadowy wooer from the clouds,
But hides and shrouds
Beneath dark palm trees by a river side?

And as I sat, over the light blue hills
 There came a noise of revellers: the rills
 Into the wide stream came of purple hue –
 'Twas Bacchus and his crew!
 The earnest trumpet spake, and silver thrills
 From kissing cymbals made a merry din –
 'Twas Bacchus and his kin!
 Like to a moving vintage down they came,
 Crown'd with green leaves, and faces all on flame;
 All madly dancing through the pleasant valley,
 To scare thee, Melancholy!
 O then, O then, thou wast a simple name!
 And I forgot thee, as the berried holly
 By shepherds is forgotten, when, in June,
 'Tall chestnuts keep away the sun and moon: –
 I rush'd into the folly!

Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus stood,
 Trifling his ivy-dart, in dancing mood,
 With sidelong laughing;
 And little rills of crimson wine imbrued
 His plump white arms, and shoulders, enough white
 For Venus' pearly bite:
 And near him rode Silenus on his ass,
 Pelted with flowers as he on did pass
 Tipsily quaffing.

'Whence came ye, merry Damsels! whence came ye!
 So many, and so many, and such glee?
 Why have ye left your bowers desolate,
 You lutes, and gentler fate?' –
 'We follow Bacchus! Bacchus on the wing,
 A conquering!

Bacchus, young Bacchus! good or ill betide,
We dance before him thorough kingdoms wide: –
Come hither, lady fair, and joined be
To our wild minstrelsy!

‘Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs! whence came ye!
So many, and so many, and such glee?
Why have ye left your forest haunts, why left
Your nuts in oak-tree cleft?’ –
‘For wine, for wine left we our kernel tree;
For wine we left our heath, and yellow brooms,
And cold mushrooms;
For wine we follow Bacchus through the earth;
Great God of breathless cups and chirping mirth! –
Come hither, lady fair, and joined be
To our mad minstrelsy!’

Over wide streams and mountains great we went,
And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy tent,
Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,
With Asian elephants:
Onward these myriads – with song and dance,
With zebras striped, and sleek Arabians’ prance,
Web-footed alligators, crocodiles,
Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,
Plump infant laughers mimicking the coil
Of seamen, and stout galley-rows’ toil:
With toying oars and silken sails they glide,
Nor care for wind and tide.

Mounted on panthers’ furs and lions’ manes,
From rear to van they scour about the plains;
A three days’ journey in a moment done:

And always, at the rising of the sun,
 About the wilds they hunt with spear and horn,
 On spleenful unicorn.

I saw Osirian Egypt kneel adown
 Before the vine-wreath crown!
 I saw parch'd Abyssinia rouse and sing
 To the silver cymbals' ring!
 I saw the whelming vintage hotly pierce
 Old Tartary the fierce!
 The kings of Inde their jewel-sceptres vail,
 And from their treasures scatter pearled hail;
 Great Brahma from his mystic heaven groans,
 And all his priesthood moans;
 Before young Bacchus' eye-wink turning pale. —
 Into these regions came I following him,
 Sick hearted, weary — so I took a whim
 To stray away into these forests drear
 Alone, without a peer:
 And I have told thee all thou mayest hear.

Young stranger!
 I've been a ranger
 In search of pleasure throughout every clime:
 Alas, 'tis not for me!
 Bewitch'd I sure must be,
 To lose in grieving all my maiden prime.

Come, then, Sorrow!
 Sweetest Sorrow!
 Like an own babe I nurse thee on my breast:
 I thought to leave thee
 And deceive thee,
 But now of all the world I love thee best.

There is not one,
 No, no, not one
 But thee to comfort a poor lonely maid;
 Thou art her mother,
 And her brother,
 Her playmate, and her wooer in the shade.

The Eve of St Agnes

I

St Agnes' Eve – Ah, bitter chill it was!
 The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
 'The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass,
 And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
 Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
 His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
 Like pious incense from a censer old,
 Seemed taking flight for heaven, without a death,
 Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

II

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;
 Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,
 And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, &
 Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:
 The sculptured dead, on each side, seemed to freeze,
 Imprisoned in black, purgatorial rails:
 Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
 He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
 To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

III

Northward he turneth through a little door,
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue
Flattered to tears this aged man and poor;
But no – already had his deathbell rung;
The joys of all his life were said and sung:
His was harsh penance on St Agnes' Eve:
Another way he went, and soon among
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to grieve.

IV

The ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft;
And so it chanced, for many a door was wide,
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide:
The level chambers, ready with their pride,
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests:
The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,
Stared, where upon their heads the cornice rests,
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on their breasts.

V

At length burst in the argent revelry,
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
Numerous as shadows haunting faerily
The brain, new stuffed, in youth, with triumphs gay
Of old romance. These let us wish away,
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,
On love, and winged St Agnes' saintly care,
As she had heard old dames full many times declare.

VI

They told her how, upon St Agnes' Eve,
 Young virgins might have visions of delight,
 And soft adorings from their loves receive
 Upon the honeyed middle of the night,
 If ceremonies due they did aright;
 As, supperless to bed they must retire,
 And couch supine their beauties, lily white;
 Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
 Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

VII

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:
 The music, yearning like a God in pain,
 She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,
 Fixed on the floor, saw many a sweeping train
 Pass by – she heeded not at all: in vain
 Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,
 And back retired; not cooled by high disdain,
 But she saw not: her heart was otherwise:
 She sighed for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year.

La Belle Dame Sans Merci

O what can ail thee Knight at arms
 Alone and palely loitering?
 The sedge is withered from the Lake
 And no birds sing!

O what can ail thee Knight at arms
 So haggard, and so woe begone?
 The squirrel's granary is full
 And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too –

I met a Lady in the Meads
Full beautiful, a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light
And her eyes were wild –

I made a Garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant Zone:
She looked at me as she did love
And made sweet moan –

I set her on my pacing steed
And nothing else saw all day long
For sidelong would she bend and sing
•A faery's song –

She found me roots of relish sweet
And honey wild and manna dew
And sure in language strange she said
I love thee true –

She took me to her elfin grot
And there she wept and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I dreamed Ah Woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dreamt
On the cold hill side.

I saw pale Kings, and Princes too,
 Pale warriors, death pale were they all,
 Who cried, *Le belle dame sans merci*
 Thee hath in thrall.

I saw their starved lips in the gloam
 With horrid warning gaped wide,
 And I awoke, and found me here
 On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here
 Alone and palely loitering;
 Though the sedge is withered from the Lake
 And no birds sing - ...

Ode to a Nightingale

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
 'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
 But being too happy in thy happiness,
 That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees, ●
 In some melodious plot
 Of beechen green, and shadows num'rous ●, ●
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage! that hath been
 Cooled a long age in the deep-delved earth,
 Tasting of Flora and the country green,
 Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
 O for a beaker full of the warm South!

Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new love pine at them beyond tomorrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;

Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves;
 And mid-May's eldest child,
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and for many a time
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,
 Called him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
 To take into the air my quiet breath;
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
 In such an ecstasy!
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain –
 To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
 No hungry generations tread thee down;
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard
 In ancient days by emperor and clown.
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
 The same that oft-times hath
 Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
 Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
 As she is fabled to do, deceiving elf.
 Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
 Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep

In the next valley-glades:
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
 Fled is that music: – do I wake or sleep?

Ode on a Grecian Urn

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
 Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
 Sylvian historian, who canst thus express
 A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
 What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape
 Of deities or mortals, or of both,
 In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
 What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
 What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
 What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
 Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
 Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
 Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
 Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
 Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
 Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
 Though winning near the goal – yet, do not grieve;
 She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
 For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
 Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
 And, happy melodist, unwearied,
 For ever piping songs for ever new;
 More happy love! more happy, happy love!
 For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,

For ever panting, and for ever young;
 All breathing human passion far above,
 That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
 A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
 To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
 Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
 And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
 What little town by river or sea shore,
 Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
 Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?
 And, little town, thy streets for evermore
 Will silent be: and not a soul to tell
 Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
 Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
 With forest branches and the trodden weed;
 Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
 As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
 When old age shall this generation waste,
 Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
 Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty' – that is all
 Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

To Autumn

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
 Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
 Conspiring with him how to load and bless
 With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;

To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spare the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too, —
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-cricket sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

Fancy

Ever let the fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home:
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;
Then let winged Fancy wander
Through the thought still spread beyond her:
Open wide the mind's cage-door,
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming;
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloy with tasting: What do then?
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the caked snow is shuffled
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;
When the Night doth meet the Noon
In a dark conspiracy
To banish Even from her sky.
Sit thee there, and send abroad,
With a mind self-overaw'd,
Fancy, high-commission'd: — send her!
She has vassals to attend her:
She will bring, in spite of frost,
Beauties that the earth hath lost;
She will bring thee, all together,
All delights of summer weather;

All the buds and bells of May,
From dewy sward or thorny spray;
All the heaped Autumn's wealth,
With a still, mysterious stealth:
She will mix these pleasures up
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it: – thou shalt hear
Distant harvest-carols clear;
Rustle of the reaped corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn:
And, in the same moment – hark!
'Tis the early April lark,
Or the rooks, with busy caw,
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold
The daisy and the marigold;
White-plum'd lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;
Shaded hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;
And every leaf, and every flower
Pearled with the self-same shower.
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep
Meagre from its celled sleep;
And the snake all winter-thin
Cast on sunny bank its skin;
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet on her mossy nest;
Then the hurry and alarm
When the bee-hive casts its swarm;
Acorns ripe down-pattering,
While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Every thing is spoilt by use:
Where's the cheek that doth not fade,
Too much gaz'd at? Where's the maid
Whose lip mature is ever new?
Where's the eye, however blue,
Doth not weary? Where's the face
One would meet in every place?
Where's the voice, however soft,
One would hear so very oft?
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.
Let, then, wingèd Fancy find
Thee a mistress to thy mind:
Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter,
Ere the God of Torment taught her
How to frown and how to chide;
With a waist and with a side
White as Hebe's, with her zone
Slit its golden clasp, and down
Fell her kirtle to her feet,
While she held the goblet sweet,
And Jove grew languid. — Break the mesh
Of the Fancy's silken leash;
Quickly break her prison-string
And such joys as these she'll bring. —
Let the wingèd Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home.

Sonnet

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art –
 Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
 And watching, with eternal lids apart,
 Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
 The moving waters at their priestlike task
 Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
 Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
 Of snow upon the mountains and the moors –
 No – yet still stedfast, still unchangeable,
 Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
 To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
 Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
 Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
 And so live ever – or else swoon to death.

CHARLES LAMB

From A Farewell to Tobacco

Sooty retainer to the vine,
 Bacchus' black servant, negro fine;
 Sorcerer, that mak'st us dote upon
 Thy begrimed complexion,
 And, for thy pernicious sake,
 More and greater oaths to break
 Than reclaimed lovers take
 'Gainst women: thou thy siege dost lay
 Much too in the female way,
 While thou suck'st the lab'ring breath
 Faster than kisses or than death.

Thou in such a cloud dost bind us,
That our worst foes cannot find us,
And ill-fortune, that would thwart us,
Shoots at rovers, shooting at us;
While each man, through thy height'ning steam,
Does like a smoking Etna seem,
And all about us does express –
Fancy and wit in richest dress –
A Sicilian fruitfulness.

The Old Familiar Faces

I have had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom-cronies;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a love once, fairest among women;
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man;
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my childhood,
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces –

How some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

JEREMIAH JOSEPH CALLANAN

The Convict of Clonmell

How hard is my fortune,
And vain my repining!
The strong rope of fate
For this young neck is twining.
My strength is departed;
My cheek sunk and sallow;
While I languish in chains,
In the gaol of Cluanmeala.

No boy in the village
Was ever yet milder,
I'd play with a child,
And my sport would be wilder.
I'd dance without tiring
From morning till even,
And the goal-ball I'd strike
To the lightning of Heaven.

At my bed-foot decaying,
 My hurlbat is lying,
 'Througħ the boys of the village
 My goal-ball is flying;
 My horse 'mong the neighbours
 Neglected may fallow, –
 While I pine in my chains,
 In the gaol of Cluanmcala.

Next Sunday the patron
 At home will be keeping,
 And the young active hurlers
 'The field will be sweeping,
 With the dance of fair maidens
 The evening they'll hallow,
 While this heart, once so gay,
 Shall be cold in Cluanmeala.

GEORGE DARLEY

From Nepenthe (i)

In the caves of the deep – lost Youth! lost Youth!
 O'er and o'er, fleeting billows! fleeting billows! --
 Rung to his restless everlasting sleep
 By the heavy death-bells of the deep,
 Under the slimy-dropping sea-green willows,
 Poor Youth! lost Youth!
 Laying his dolorous head, forsooth,
 On Carian reefs uncouth –
 Poor Youth!
 On the wild sand's ever-shifting pillows!

In the foam's cold shroud – lost Youth! lost Youth –
And the lithe waterweed swathing round him! –
Mocked by the surges roaring o'er him loud,
'Will the sun-seeker freeze in his shroud,
Aye, where the deep-wheeling eddy has wound him?'
Lost Youth! poor Youth!
Vail him his Daedalian wings, in truth?
Stretched there without all ruth –
Poor Youth! –
Weeping fresh torrents into those that drowned him!

From *Nepenthe* (ii)

O blest unfabled Incense Tree,
That burns in glorious Araby,
With red scent chaliceing the air,
'Till earth-life grow Elysian there!

Half buried to her flaming breast
In this bright tree, she makes her nest,
Hundred-sunned Phoenix! when she must
Crumble at length to hoary dust!

Her gorgeous death-bed! her rich pyre
Burnt up with aromatic fire!
Her urn, sighthigh from spoiler men!
Her birthplace when self-born again!

The mountainless green wilds among,
Here ends she her unechoing song!
With amber tears and odorous sighs
Mourned by the desert where she dies!

CAROLINE SOUTHEY

To Death

Come not in terrors clad, to claim
An unresisting prey:
Come like an evening shadow, Death!
So stealthily, so silently!
And shut mine eyes, and steal my breath;
Then willingly – oh! willingly,
With thee I'll go away.

What need to clutch with iron grasp
What gentlest touch may ta'nt?
What need, with aspect dark, to scare,
So awfully, so terribly,
The weary soul would hardly care,
Called quietly, called tenderly,
From thy dread power to break?

'Tis not as when thou markest out
The young, the blest, the gay,
The loved, the loving – they who dream
So happily, so hopefully;
Then harsh thy kindest call may seem,
And shrinkingly, reluctantly,
The summoned may obey.

But I have drunk enough of life –
 The cup assigned to me
 Dashed with a little sweet at best,
 So scantily, so scantily –
 To know full well that all the rest,
 More bitterly, more bitterly,
 Drugged to the last will be.

And I may live to pain some heart
 That kindly cares for me –
 To pain, but not to bless. O Death!
 Come quietly -- come lovingly,
 And shut mine eyes, and steal my breath;
 Then willingly -- oh! willingly,
 With thee I'll go away.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

On Catullus

Tell me not what too well I know
 About the bard of Sirmio.
 Yes, in Thalia's son
 Such stains there are – as when a Grace
 Sprinkles another's laughing face
 With nectar, and runs on.

Dirce

Stand close around, ye Stygian set,
With Dirce in one boat convey'd!
Or Charon, seeing, may forget
That he is old and she a shade.

A Confession of Jealousy

Jealous, I own it, I was once,
That wickedness I here renounce.
I tried at wit, it would not do;
At tenderness, that fail'd me too;
Before me on each path there stood
The witty and the tender Hood.

On His Seventy-Fifth Birth-day

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife,
Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;
I warmed both hands before the fire of life,
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

Biographical Notes

JOSEPH ADDISON [1672–1719]. (*page 15*) Son of Lancelot Addison, later Dean of Lichfield. Educated at Charterhouse and Queen's College, Oxford. Was elected a fellow of Magdalen in 1697 and from 1699 to 1703 travelled on the Continent on a Government pension of £300 a year. During his tour he wrote his *Letter from Italy*. On his return he went through a short spell of poverty before being appointed to an Under-Secretaryship of State. He became friendly with Swift and Steele and contributed to Steele's *Tatler* until it ceased to appear in 1711, when he and Steele started the *Spectator* on which Addison's fame chiefly rests. His verse-tragedy, *Cato*, was produced in 1713 and was widely acclaimed. In 1715 Addison quarrelled with Pope who subsequently satirized him in the character of Atticus. In 1716 he became a Lord Commissioner of Trade and married the Dowager Countess of Warwick. The marriage was not a success, nor was Addison successful as a politician though Sunderland appointed him a Secretary of State. The last year of Addison's life found him engaged in an acrimonious dispute with Steele. In June 1719 he died at Holland House after prolonged suffering from asthma and dropsy. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

MARK AKENSIDE [1721–70]. (*page 79*) Born at Newcastle, son of a well-to-do Presbyterian butcher. Throughout his life Akenside was lame as a result of a cut from his father's cleaver. He was educated first at the Free School of Newcastle and afterwards at a private academy kept by a local Dissenting minister. At the age of sixteen he had a poem in imitation of Spenser published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. After starting his training for a religious career Akenside changed to medicine and in 1740 was elected a member of the Edinburgh Medical Society and at the meetings of the Society he at once made his mark by his talent as a speaker.

Meanwhile, he did not neglect poetry, and his great work, *The Pleasures of Imagination*, was completed in 1743 and offered to Dodsley, the bookseller to whose discernment we owe the publication of so much of the best poetry of his time. Dodsley consulted Pope, who advised acceptance. The poem appeared in 1744 and the author at once became famous. Gray, however, although recognizing merit in the poem, was critical, and Warburton, whose judgment carried more weight than it generally deserved, was violent in his denunciation. In the same year Akenside visited Holland and took his degree of Doctor of Physic at Leyden. On his return he started in practice at Northampton and soon after brought out his *Epistle to Curio*. He collected his odes and published them in 1745 and other poems were published in the following years. In 1748 he moved to London and settled in Bloomsbury Square, receiving an allowance of £300 a year from his friend and patron Jeremiah Dyson. Akenside seems by this time to have become conceited and overbearing and Smollett, of whom he fell foul, caricatured him as the Doctor in *Peregrine Pickle*. He was, however, always helpful and encouraging to his fellow poets. In 1759 Akenside was appointed physician to St Thomas's Hospital and later to Christ's Hospital and in 1761 to George III's Queen. He died of fever after a short illness.

JOHN ARMSTRONG [1709-79]. (page 94) Born at Castleton in Roxburghshire, the son of the local minister. At the University of Edinburgh Armstrong concentrated on languages, philosophy and medicine and took his M.D. in 1732. He started practice in London without much success, but he soon achieved a certain prominence with his pen, using it first to lash the quacks of the day and subsequently to provide a study of venereal disease. His first poem, the *Economy of Love*, based on Ovid's *Art of Love*, was published soon after, and in 1744 appeared his *Art of Preserving Health*, which was received with much applause. Two years later he was appointed one of the physicians to the Soldiers' Hospital near Buckingham House and in 1760 physician to the forces in Germany. When peace was signed in 1763

Armstrong, who continued to produce frequent poems and essays, returned to London where he practised until his death.

LADY ANNE BARNARD [1750-1825]. (*page 92*) Daughter of James Lindsay, 5th Earl of Balcarres. In 1793 she married Andrew Barnard, son of the Bishop of Limerick, and accompanied her husband to the Cape of Good Hope where he served under Lord Macartney as Secretary to the Colony. The ballad, *Auld Robin Gray*, was written in 1771 and at once became popular, but the authoress concealed her identity for more than fifty years, acknowledging it, with details of the circumstances in which the ballad was written, in a letter to Sir Walter Scott two years before her death.

JAMES BEATTIE [1735-1803]. (*page 80*) Born at Laurencekirk in Kincardineshire, son of a small farmer-shopkeeper who died when Beattie was seven years old. He was educated at the parish school and Marischal College, Aberdeen, where he captured the best bursary. He was an assiduous student with wide academic interests. After taking his degree he became parish schoolmaster at Fordoun, near his birthplace, and contributed a few poems to the *Scots Magazine*, but in 1758 he obtained a post at Aberdeen Grammar School and two years later was appointed Professor of Philosophy at Marischal College. In 1761 a volume of his early poems was published and was well received by the critics who proclaimed it the best poetry that had appeared since Gray had more or less stopped writing verse four years earlier. He was more modest about it himself and set out to destroy every copy of his book he could procure. In 1763 he visited London and called on Pope at Twickenham, and in 1765 met Gray whose taste, judgment and learning made a profound impression on the younger man. In 1767 Beattie married the daughter of the rector of Aberdeen Grammar School. In 1770 he published his *Essay on Truth*, which was a shallow but popular attack on David Hume and his followers. In 1773 Oxford University rewarded him with an LL.D., he was received by the King and Queen and was given a pension of £200. The first part of his best known

poem, *The Minstrel*, had been published anonymously in 1770 and was severely treated by the reviewers, but when in 1774 the second part appeared the author, now famous, was generously applauded. More publications followed, but in 1796 his only remaining son died, and Beattie, overcome with grief, retired from all society and ceased writing. In 1799 he had a paralytic stroke and died after several repetitions of the same malady four years later. He is buried in the churchyard of St Nicholas, Aberdeen.

ROBERT BLAIR [1699-1746]. (*page 51*) Born at Edinburgh, the eldest son of a minister who was also one of the King's chaplains. He was educated at Edinburgh University and later in Holland. In 1731 he was appointed to the living of Athelstaneford in East Lothian, where he devoted himself to his pastoral duties and to nature study. In 1738 he married Isabella Law, by whom he had five sons and a daughter. His only important poem, *The Grave*, was completed about the time of his marriage and in 1742 he sent it to his acquaintance, Dr Isaac Watts, who thought it good and submitted it to several booksellers with a view to publication. It was rejected, however, on the ground that only work in the style of Pope had any appeal at the time. Blair persisted and the poem was published in 1743. It was reprinted in Edinburgh a year after his death.

WILLIAM BLAKE [1757-1827]. (*page 116*) Born in London, the son of a hosier. He was apprenticed to James Basire, engraver to the Society of Antiquaries, and throughout the leisure time of his youth his pencil was busy with drawing and poetry. His earliest poems were published in 1783 at the expense of his friends Flaxman and Mrs Mathew. In 1789 came the first of his poems to show the mystical trend of his mind. The *Songs of Innocence* he illustrated with his own tinted engravings printed on copper in a manner he had himself invented. From 1789 to 1791 while living in Poland Street he wrote and himself engraved a number of poems, among them *The Book of Thel* and the *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. During 1794-5, he produced *Songs of Experience*, *The Book of Urizen*, *Europe*, and other

works. In 1800 he went to live at Felpham in Sussex in order to be near Hayley, for whose *Life of Cowper* he was engaged in making engravings. From that time until his death Blake's main energies were directed towards painting and engraving. He returned to London and in 1804 wrote and engraved his famous prophetic poems *Jerusalem* and *Milton*. During most of his life his fight with poverty, and in later years ill health, was shared and greatly relieved by his wife Catherine whom he had married as a young and completely illiterate child. His last drawing was of Catherine as she sat by his bedside.

ROBERT BURNS [1759-96]. (page 110) Was born at Alloway in Ayrshire, the son of a labourer with some culture. Educated in and about the village, he was put to farming at an early age. On the death of his father, he went into partnership with his brother and together they ran farms at Lochlea and Mossgiel, but these ventures were dogged by misfortune. Many of his best poems were written during his farming years, among them *The Jolly Beggars*, *Hallowe'en*, *Holy Willie's Prayer*, *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, *To a Mouse*, and *To a Mountain Daisy*. In 1786 he seems to have contemplated emigrating to Jamaica, where a post on a plantation had been offered him, but the financial success of the Kilmarnock edition of his poems changed his mind, and he went instead to Edinburgh. There his manner and lively conversation ensured for him great personal popularity, and he was fêted wherever he went. In spite of his charm he was never a man of strength or stability of character, and this lionization was to be his undoing, by destroying the zest for life which marked his earlier works. In 1788 the second edition of his poems brought him £500, and with this he decided to settle down. He bought a small farm at Ellisland and married Jean Armour, one of his many loves. The farm proved a failure, but fortunately he received an appointment as exciseman, which, together with further writings, saved him from extreme poverty. Among other things he contributed some 200 songs to the successive volumes of James Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* — most famous among them being *Auld Lang Syne*, *Scots wha hae*, and *A Red,*

Red Rose. Later he contributed such lyrics as *John Anderson, my Jo*, and *Comin' thro' the Rye* and *The Banks of Doon* to George Thomson's *Scottish Airs with Poetry*.

JOHN BYROM [1692-1763]. (*page 20*) A native of Manchester, educated at Merchant Taylors' School, Trinity College, Cambridge, and Montpellier in France where he studied medicine. On returning from France he went back to Manchester and proceeded to teach a system of shorthand he had invented and which was secured to him by Act of Parliament. Gibbon and Horace Walpole were among his pupils. Thanks largely to family legacies he lived the latter part of his life in fairly affluent circumstances. He was an ardent Jacobite and included in his small literary output is a Jacobite Toast:

God bless the King! — I mean the Faith's Defender;
 God bless (no harm in blessing) the Pretender!
 But who Pretender is, or who is King,
 God bless us all! — that's quite another thing.

He was also the author of several religious poems, among them the hymn, *Christians, awake!* Of his poem, *Careless Content*, Southey writes, 'it is so perfectly in the manner of Elizabeth's age that we ... are almost disposed to think that Byrom had transcribed it from some old author.'

GEORGE GORDON BYRON [1788-1824]. (*page 180*) Born in London, the son of the dissolute Captain John Byron and his second wife Catherine Gordon of Gight. He succeeded unexpectedly to the title at the age of ten. Lame from an accident at birth, he was educated at Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1807 he published *Juvenilia*, afterwards retitled *Hours of Idleness*, which were bitterly criticized in the *Edinburgh Review*. He replied in 1809 in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. From 1809-11 he travelled abroad, taking his seat in the House of Lords on his return. In 1812 came the first two cantos of *Childe Harold* and from 1812-16 *The Giaour*, *The Bride of*

Abydos, The Corsair, Lara, Parisina, The Siege of Corinth, Hebrew Melodies and *The Dream*. In 1815 he made his disastrous marriage with Anne Isabella Milbanke. The following year he left England, never to see either his country or his wife again. He met the Shelleys and with them travelled across Switzerland and Italy. Claire Clairmont, Mary Shelley's step-sister, accompanied them. She was the mother of Byron's short-lived daughter Allegra. Between the years 1816 and 1818 he wrote the third and fourth cantos of *Childe Harold*, *The Lament of Tasso*, the first five cantos of *Don Juan* and *Beppo*. In 1819 came his attachment to the Countess Guiccioli and with her he lived in Venice and Ravenna. During this period of his life most of his dramas were produced, among them *Manfred*, *Cain*, *Marino Faliero*, *Sardanapalus* and *Mazeppa*. In 1822 he joined with Leigh Hunt in editing *The Liberal*. Disappointed by its failure and stirred with enthusiasm for the cause of Greek liberty he decided to take an active part in the rising, but at Missolonghi he contracted a fever from which he died. He is buried at Hucknall Torkard near his family seat in Nottinghamshire.

JEREMIAH JOSEPH CALLANAN [1795-1839]. (*page 222*) An Irish poet with whose translations from the Gaelic an honest style, as W. B. Yeats said, first came into English-speaking Ireland. Although his fame was negligible in comparison with that of Thomas Moore, who was his senior by sixteen years, and outlived him by thirteen, his influence on the trend of Irish poetry was infinitely greater.

THOMAS CAMPBELL [1777-1844]. (*page 20*) Born in Glasgow, the son of a Virginia merchant who was suffering some financial distress at the time of the birth of Thomas, who was his eleventh child. Campbell was educated at Glasgow University and afterwards sent as clerk to a merchant's office. He was soon, as the result of the publication of *The Wounded Hussar*, encouraged to look to literature for his living, and 1798 his financial success became assured by the publication of *The Pleasures of Hope*. The money enabled him to visit Germany and other parts

of the Continent. In 1803 a subscription edition of his poems brought him sufficient wealth to marry; and with his wife, Matilda Sinclair, he settled in Sydenham, remaining there until 1820. Among his longer poems, *Gertrude of Wyoming* was published in 1809, *Theodoric* in 1824, and *The Pilgrim of Glencoe* in 1842. His wife and sole surviving child had died in 1824, and the last two years of his life he spent in solitude at Boulogne. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.

GEORGE CANNING [1770-1827]. (*page 172*) Born in London, he was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. He became the Member of Parliament for Newport, Isle of Wight, in 1794 and made his reputation by speeches in support of the abolition of the slave trade. In 1822 he became Foreign Secretary, and Prime Minister in 1827. For some time he was an energetic contributor to *The Anti-Jacobin*, of which he himself had been one of the founders, and in 1823 he published a volume of his poems.

HENRY CAREY [1693-1743]. (*page 38*) Little is known of the life of Henry Carey beyond the fact that he was a professional musician, composing the air as well as the words of *Sally in Our Alley*, that he invented the nickname of 'Namby Pamby' for a contemporary poet, Ambrose Phillips, that he was the author of the burlesques *Chrononhotonthologos* and *The Dragon of Wantley*, and that he died by his own hand.

THOMAS CHATTERTON [1752-70]. (*page 88*) Born at Bristol, posthumous son of a teacher in the Bristol free-school. He learned to read from a black-letter bible. When fourteen Chatterton was apprenticed to an attorney. Two years later the new Bridge at Bristol was finished and Chatterton sent to a newspaper a fictitious account of the opening of the old bridge, alleging that he had found most of the description in an ancient MS. Further remarkable forgeries followed: poems that he claimed had been written four hundred or more years before, fragments of early sermons on the Holy Spirit, fifteenth-century

accounts of the Bristol churches, and drawings and descriptions of the castle, most of which he attributed to 'ane gode prieste, Thomas Rowley'. To serve Chatterton as a guide and inspiration were some MSS. which his father had acquired from the coffer of a Mr Canynge, a merchant of Bristol in the reign of Edward IV, which had been deposited in the Church of St Mary Redcliffe.

A keen controversy broke out as to the genuineness of Chatterton's 'discoveries.' Horace Walpole, to whom Chatterton had sent some of his work, consulted Gray who promptly pronounced it to be fake, but surprisingly made no effort to interest himself in the young author, although the quality of his writing must have been recognized by him.

Chatterton finally decided to go to London where he found immediate employment among the booksellers. He projected a History of England and a History of London, both of which failed to materialize and, as money became short, reduced to despair by disappointment, misery, intemperance and remorse, Chatterton took arsenic and died before reaching his eighteenth birthday. His body was placed in the burial-place of Shoe Lane Workhouse. Later critics have gone to extremes in their judgment of Chatterton's genius. Some have been so far carried away by their enthusiasm as to place him only next to Shakespeare in our literature. Among those who took a calmer view was Hazlitt who says 'he did not show extraordinary powers of genius, but extraordinary precocity.'

CHARLES CHURCHILL [1731-64]. (*page 77*) Born in Vine Street, Westminster, eldest son of a clergyman, and educated at Westminster School where Cowper who was exactly the same age was also a pupil, as was also Warren Hastings. From Westminster Churchill went on to Trinity College, Cambridge, but very soon returned to London and, though only eighteen, made a secret marriage with a young woman called Scott, whose parents were as annoyed about the matter as his own. A reconciliation with his father followed. A year later Churchill moved to Sunderland where he assiduously studied poetry and started a course of theological reading with a 'view to taking Holy

Orders. In 1753 he again came back to London, became an ardent student of the theatre and attached himself to theatrical circles, gathering material for his satire on contemporary actors published in 1761 under the title of *The Rosciad*. Meanwhile he had been ordained deacon and obtained a Somersetshire curacy, where he was so diligent in his duties that a successful career in the Church seemed probable for him. Shortage of funds and the responsibility of a family, however, led to his opening a school and later to his doing tutorial work. About this time he renewed a schoolboy friendship with Robert Lloyd, the son of one of the Westminster masters, a young man of dissolute habits. The two engaged in the wildest dissipation and Churchill's wife seems to have followed suit. His poems, on which Churchill had relied to meet his debts, failed to interest booksellers and even *The Rosciad* he had ultimately to publish at his own expense. It was issued anonymously and its effect was staggering. Churchill became the man of the moment. Feeling ran high, and to protect himself from threatened assaults on the part of the victims of his satire he had to go about carrying a huge bludgeon. The poem and its sequel earned him £2,000, and his self-indulgence correspondingly increased. His wife left him; the Church authorities remonstrated in vain. He resigned his clerical duties and abandoned himself to dissipation. He still continued to write, however; and six months after the appearance of *The Rosciad* he published his poem, *Night*. In 1762 Churchill fell under the influence of Wilkes, the notorious editor of the *North Briton*. After the trial of Wilkes, Churchill on his friend's behalf violently attacked Hogarth, who in turn caricatured Churchill as a bear with torn clerical bands with a pot of porter in one hand and a knot of lies in the other. Churchill was now fairly wealthy and was living first at Richmond and then in considerable state at Acton with a respectable young woman who had become his mistress. But in 1764 he felt an urge to see Wilkes who had fled to France after his expulsion from the House of Commons. He crossed to Boulogne but while there contracted a fever, dying a few days later. In his will he provided both for his wife and for his mistress and left his MSS. to Wilkes. He was buried at Dover.

Churchill's one virtue as a man was his generosity and loyalty to his friends. As a poet the great reputation he enjoyed during his lifetime failed to last. The great critics have been almost unanimous in their condemnation, from Johnson who pronounced him 'a huge and fertile crab-tree' to Saintsbury who remarked that 'Churchill's fame has steadily and deservedly sunk ever since his death.' There has at least never been an English poet capable of more vigorous and fearless invective.

S. T. COLERIDGE [1772-1834]. (page 120) Born at Ottery St Mary of which his father was Vicar. Educated at Christ's Hospital where he met Lamb and later went to Jesus College, Cambridge. While an undergraduate he went, for no accountable reason, to London and enlisted in the 15th Dragoons. He was, however, discharged after a few months and returned to Cambridge. He became acquainted with Southey and together with their wives, who were sisters, they contemplated founding an ideal State based on their principle of 'Pantisocracy' on the banks of the Susquehanna. Some of his early verses appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* during 1793-5 and in 1794 with Southey he wrote *The Fall of Robespierre*. In 1796 his attempt to start a newspaper *The Watchman* failed. Early in 1795 he had made the acquaintance of Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy. Together they worked in Somerset and produced the *Lyrical Ballads*, which contain some of Coleridge's finest poems, including *The Ancient Mariner*. During 1797 he wrote *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan*. The ardour of his republican enthusiasm was, like Wordsworth's, damped by the course of the French revolution and in 1798 *France, an Ode* indicated his change of attitude. His translations of Schiller's *Piccolomini* and *Wallenstein* came as the result of his visit to Germany in 1798-9. From 1800-4 he lived quietly at Keswick and the second part of *Christabel* was published, but in 1806, after his travels in Italy and the Mediterranean, his health failed, and to soothe the acute neuralgia from which he suffered he became an opium addict. In 1809 his second essay in editorship was hardly more successful than his first, although subsequently the various issues of *The Friend* were

rewritten and bound together as one volume. Owing to his poor health and drug addiction much of the rest of his life was spent in the houses of friends and relations. Josiah and Thomas Wedgwood were among those who gave him much needed financial aid. In 1817 his *Biographia Literaria* and in 1825 his *Aids to Reflection* appeared. In 1828 he went once more to Germany with the Wordsworths. He died in his sleep.

WILLIAM COLLINS [1721-59]. (*page 55*) Born in Chichester on Christmas Day, the son of a hatter. Educated at Winchester College and Magdalen College, Oxford, at both of which he obtained scholarships. Collins intended to enter the church but changed his mind and decided to devote himself to literature. He published some poems while still at Oxford and in 1747 his *Odes* appeared, but attracted little attention. Disappointment led to indolence and dissipation, although his talent remained with him long enough for him to write in 1749 his long Ode on the *Superstitions of the Highlands* which was not published until after his death. He was also the author of some other works of which unfortunately no record remains. The death of his friend Thomson in 1748 probably contributed to the melancholia which gradually took possession of him and in 1754 developed into insanity. For the last five years of his life he was looked after by his sister in Chichester, wandering when alone among the aisles and cloisters of the Cathedral and accompanying the music with sobs and moans. His *Odes*, in spite of the coldness with which they were received, ultimately found admirers and within a generation were established as the best of their kind in the language.

WILLIAM CONGREVE [1670-1729]. (*page 19*) Born at Bardsey near Leeds, of an old Staffordshire family. His father became commander of the garrison at Youghal and Congreve was educated at Kilkenny School and Trinity College, Dublin, at both of which he was a fellow student of Swift who was three years his senior. On his family's return to England Congreve entered the Middle Temple but abandoned the law for writing

and became friendly with Dryden who, when *The Old Bachelor* was produced at the *Theatre Royal* in 1693, said he never saw such a first play in his life. Further plays followed and met with great success, but Congreve seems to have been so chagrined by the comparative failure of *The Way of the World* in 1700 that he more or less laid down his pen at the early age of thirty, becoming a few years later Commissioner of Wine Licences. Swift, Steele, Gay and Pope were among his friends and admirers and he was visited by Voltaire. His closest friendship was, however, with Mrs Bracegirdle, the charming and famous actress. He died as a result of injuries following an accident to the coach in which he was travelling from Bath to London. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

WILLIAM COWPER [1731-1800]. (page 96) Born at Great Berkhamsted, the son of the Rector. His mother died when he was six and for the following two years he was at boarding school where, it is said, he suffered much from the bullying of an older boy. Later he was removed and sent to Westminster where among his friends were Charles Churchill and Warren Hastings. He was called to the Bar in 1754 and in 1756 his father died, leaving him but slender means. On the eve of his appointment as Clerk of the Journals of the House of Lords in 1763 he was overcome by the first of his bouts of insanity. Fortunately he was placed in the hands of an excellent doctor and in his care wrote his *Sapphics*. By 1765 he was sufficiently cured to be able to live a gentle country life with Morley Unwin and his wife Mary, and when Morley Unwin died as the result of a fall from his horse, Cowper and the widow moved to Orchard Side in Olney in Buckinghamshire. There it was he became acquainted with John Newton the curate and with him composed some hymns and religious poems. Newton's unbridled zeal was, however, too much for Cowper's frail mental balance and his attacks of insanity became more frequent. All this time Mary Unwin nursed him with patient and untiring devotion and on his recovery he wrote, with an ease and facility before unknown to him. *Table Talk* appeared and a volume of poems followed

quickly on *Antithelypthora*. In 1783 came the anonymous *John Gilpin*, and then, encouraged by Lady Austin, who had come to live in Olney, he wrote *The Task*. Further work was delayed by a new attack of illness and melancholy, but in 1791 his *Translations from Homer* were published. Once more he began to write with pleasure and ease, but the paralysis which attacked Mary Unwin and led to her death finally overclouded his mind and for the remainder of his life he was almost permanently insane. He died at East Dereham in Norfolk and there he is buried.

GEORGE CRABBE [1754-1832]. (page 176) Born at Aldeburgh in Suffolk, son of a collector of salt-duties. He was apprenticed to a doctor and started medical practice at Aldeburgh. In 1780 he went to London and was befriended by Edmund Burke. His poem *The Library* was published in 1781 and in the same year Crabbe took orders, and from 1782 to 1785 was Chaplain to the Duke of Rutland. *The Village* appeared in 1783; *The Borough* in 1810 and *Tales of the Hall* in 1819, five years after Crabbe's appointment as Vicar of Trowbridge.

GEORGE DARLEY [1795-1846]. (page 223) Born in Dublin, son of an Irishman of good family, and educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He was afflicted with a stammer which throughout his life embittered him and turned him into a misanthrope in his later years. His first publication was a small volume of poems, *The Errors of Ecstasy*, which appeared in 1822. He then became a regular contributor to the *London Magazine* and came into contact with many of the leading literary figures of the day. His pastoral drama, *Sylvia*, was published in 1827, but although commended by Lamb and Coleridge, was a failure with the public. Two or three years later Darley joined the staff of the *Athenaeum*, being primarily responsible for art and the drama. In 1835 he printed his poem *Nepenthe* for private circulation, and it is on this work that his reputation chiefly rests.

JOHN DYER [1700-58]. (page 34) Born in Carmarthenshire. Son of a prominent solicitor. Educated at Westminster School

and intended for the legal profession, but abandoned his legal studies to become a painter-poet living an itinerant life in South Wales. His most famous poem, *Grongar Hill*, was written in its original form at this time. Dyer subsequently revised and improved it. Dyer then went to Rome to study art, wrote a long poem, *The Ruins of Rome*, and on returning to England in 1740 entered the Church and was appointed to a living in Leicestershire, where he married. There he embarked on his most ambitious work, *The Fleece*, a long poem containing a detailed account of sheep farming and wool marketing. The poem met with an indifferent reception although it had its admirers. Dr Johnson was loud in condemnation but in a later generation Wordsworth devoted a tributary sonnet to its author. In the year after the publication of *The Fleece* Dyer died.

JANE ELLIOT [1727-1805]. (page 82) Daughter of Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto. Her song, *The Flowers of the Forest*, is a lamentation for the slaughter at Flodden Field, where the English army, under the Earl of Surrey, on September 9th, 1513, defeated the army of James IV of Scotland. The battle was made the subject of many ballads both sides of the border.

WILLIAM FALCONER [1732-69]. (page 81) Born at Edinburgh, the son of a poor barber whose two other children were deaf and dumb. While still a boy he became, reluctantly, a member of the crew of a Leith merchant ship and at eighteen he was second mate on the *Britannia*, a vessel trading in the Levant. The *Britannia* was shipwrecked off Cape Colonna and Falconer's one important poem, *The Shipwreck*, is a description of the disaster. It was published in 1762 and dedicated to the Duke of York, who had perception enough to recognize Falconer's talent and offered him promotion if he left the merchant service for the Royal Navy. Falconer thereupon became a midshipman on the *Royal George* and in 1763 purser of the *Glory*, a frigate of 32 guns. While serving on the *Glory* Falconer completed and published a *Marine Dictionary*. He then abandoned the sea to concentrate on writing and lived for a while in a

London garret, having little success with his pen although *The Shipwreck* continued to run into new editions. Finally, in 1769, deciding that the life of a sailor was preferable to that of a book-seller's hack, he accepted the post of purser on the *Aurora* frigate about to sail for India. She sailed on Michaelmas Day 1769 and neither she nor any of her crew were ever heard of again.

JOHN GAY [1688–1732]. (*page 35*) Born and educated at Barnstaple, his parents dying when he was about six years old. On leaving school Gay was apprenticed to a London silk-mercator. In 1713 he became domestic secretary to the Duchess of Monmouth and brought out a comedy, *The Wife of Bath*, which was unsuccessful. In 1714 he published his *Shepherd's Week*, and other literary and dramatic productions began to appear at frequent intervals. He was already friendly with Swift and Pope and through the latter he obtained the post of secretary to Lord Clarendon who had been appointed envoy-extraordinary to Hanover. On the death of Queen Anne, Gay attempted without avail to court the favour of her successor, and his literary and dramatic productions were for some years failures. In 1720 he lost a lot of money in the South Sea Bubble. In 1726 the first volume of his famous *Fables* was published and in the same year Swift suggested to Gay the idea of a Newgate pastoral which became *The Beggar's Opera*. The opera was the rage of the town and the financial rewards were considerable for its author. Performance of the sequel, *Polly*, was banned by the Lord Chamberlain, but Gay did well out of its publication. At this time Gay was received into the house of his patrons the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry and lived there until his death. The best beloved of all the Pope and Swift circle of poets and wits, he was buried in Westminster Abbey, where his monument bears the epitaph he wrote for himself:

Life is a jest, and all things show it;
I thought so once, and now I know it.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH [1728–74]. (*page 90*) Born at Lishoy in the County of Roscommon in Ireland, second of five sons of the

parson of that parish whose portrait is drawn in *The Deserted Village*. Goldsmith was educated at the village school, and by the age of eight was already composing verses. In 1744 with the help of contributions from friends of the family Goldsmith entered Trinity College, Dublin, as a sizar, but he applied himself only spasmodically to his studies and was irregular in his habits, with the result that it was not until 1749 that he took his B.A. About this time Goldsmith's father died and Goldsmith presented himself to the Bishop of Elphin to be examined for Holy Orders. He appeared in a pair of scarlet breeches and was rejected. The irresponsibility, light-heartedness, eccentricity and naiveté of his behaviour led him constantly into adventures and scrapes of every kind, and after a tour of Europe which he started and finished without a penny in his pocket he ended up in London. He there first became an usher in a school, then a chemist's assistant, then a medical practitioner and then the manager of a classical school at Peckham. He finally threw up this last appointment to concentrate on authorship, contributing to various periodicals, and obtained regular employment from Newberry, the bookseller. He also became friendly with Joshua Reynolds, Burke and Dr Johnson, and it was through Johnson that *The Vicar of Wakefield* was sold to a bookseller for sixty pounds. The book was not published, however, until *The Traveller* had first established Goldsmith's reputation. In 1768 *The Good-natured Man*, after being rejected by Garrick, was produced by Colman at Covent Garden, where *She Stoops to Conquer* was presented five years later. In that year, 1773, Goldsmith realized wealth for the first time, earning in all about £1,800, but most of this he threw away in gaming and indiscriminate generosity and by 1774, the year of his death, he was two thousand pounds in debt. He was buried in the yard of the Temple Church.

THOMAS GRAY [1716-71]. (page 61) Born at Cornhill in London. His father, who was, like Milton's father, a money-scrivener, was apparently a man of violent disposition and his wife separated from him and joined her sister in a millinery busi-

ness on the proceeds of which she found it possible to send Gray first to Eton, where he was a contemporary of Horace Walpole, and then to Peterhouse, Cambridge. At Peterhouse, where he remained in residence after taking his degree, his fastidiousness led to his being ragged, and he transferred to Pembroke College. His ode *On a Distant Prospect of Eton College* and several other poems were published in 1742, and about the same year he started his famous *Elegy* which was finished in 1750. The ode *On the Death of a Favourite Cat* (Walpole's) was written about 1747. His Pindaric Odes were published in 1754 and 1757 and Gray became recognized as the foremost poet of the day. In 1757 he refused the Poet Laureateship which had fallen into low repute under recent holders of the office. In 1768 he was appointed Professor of History and Modern Languages at Cambridge. Three years later he was seized by a colic at College Hall and died within a week. He was buried, according to his desire, by the side of his mother at Stoke Poges, the churchyard associated with his most popular poem.

MATTHEW GREEN [1696-1737]. (*page 48*) Little information is available about Green's life or parentage. He was born in London, held a post in the Custom House where he discharged his duties diligently, and died in lodgings in Nag's-head Court, Gracechurch Street. He was distinguished by probity, sweetness of temper and urbanity of manners. He seems to have had few literary associates except Richard Glover to whom he bequeathed his MSS., none of which he published during his lifetime. *The Spleen*, of which Glover had a high opinion, was published shortly after its author's death.

SAMUEL JOHNSON [1709-84]. (*page 75*) Born at Lichfield, son of a bookseller. When three years old he was brought to London to be touched by Queen Anne for the King's Evil. Johnson was educated at Lichfield Grammar School and Pembroke College, Oxford, which he was obliged to leave before taking a degree owing to his father's financial misfortunes. For a time Johnson was an usher at Market Bosworth. Marrying at 27 Mrs Porter, a

widow of 47, he started a private school of his own at Edial. There he had only three pupils, of whom one was David Garrick. Two years later Johnson came to London with Garrick in the hope of getting his tragedy *Irene* produced. His efforts were unsuccessful and he started writing as a hack for the *Gentleman's Magazine*. In 1738 his poem, *London*, appeared and won the approval of Pope. In 1744, after the publication of his life of Richard Savage, several London booksellers commissioned Johnson to compile a Dictionary of the English Language for which he was to receive 1,500 guineas. This task took Johnson seven years, during which he found relaxation in writing his best poem, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, published in 1748. The following year Garrick produced *Irene*. For the next ten years during which his wife died, Johnson was busy first with the *Rambler*, then with the *Idler*, and then with *Rasselas*. In 1762, through the influence of Lord Bute, Johnson was given a pension of £300 a year. Two years later the Literary Club was established and there Johnson reigned over a coterie that included Burke, Reynolds, Goldsmith, Gibbon and Garrick. In 1773 the celebrated journey to the Hebrides took place — no light undertaking for a man of sixty-four, heavy, short-sighted, deaf and in indifferent health. His account of the tour was published in 1775. In 1779 began the publication of Johnson's most important literary work, his *Lives of the Poets*. Meanwhile in 1764 Johnson had met Mr Thrale (a wealthy brewer) and his wife, and became a constant visitor at their house, where he found Mrs Thrale's conversation and wit a cure for the attacks of depression which grew more frequent as he got older. In 1782 Thrale died and there was an unhappy quarrel between Johnson and Mrs Thrale. After this, Johnson lived his last two years in gloom at Bolt Court. The greatest literary figure of his own or perhaps of any subsequent age although by no means its greatest author, he was buried in Westminster Abbey, and a memorial was erected to him in St Paul's.

JOHN KEATS [1795-1821]. (page 201) Born at Moorfields, London, the son of a livery stable keeper, educated at Enfield,

apprenticed to an apothecary and later to a surgeon; and then became a dresser at Guy's Hospital. This, however, he abandoned for literature. In 1816 Leigh Hunt published a sonnet of his in the *Examiner*. Aided by Shelley he published in 1817 a collection of his poems, and in 1818 his *Endymion* was published and virulently attacked in *Blackwood's Magazine* and the *Quarterly*; this did not, however, prevent him from publishing *Hyperion*. The following year he nursed his dying brother, began *The Eve of St Agnes* and wrote *La Belle Dame sans Merci*, and his unfinished *The Eve of St Mark*. To this period of his life also belong *On a Grecian Urn*, *To a Nightingale*, *Autumn*, *On Melancholy*, *On Indolence* and *To Psyche*, and at this time, too, came his love for Fanny Brawne. His dramatic experiments *Otho the Great* and *King Stephen*, and other poems such as *The Eve of St Agnes* and *Isabella or the Pot of Basil* appeared in 1820, and in this year his fatal malady became only too apparent. Hoping that to avoid the English winter would help him, he left for Italy in September 1820, but five months later he was dead. He is buried in Rome.

CHARLES LAMB [1775-1834]. (page 221) Born in London, the son of a lawyer's clerk living in Crown Office Row in the Temple, Lamb was educated at Christ's Hospital where his life-long friendship with Coleridge began. From 1792 to 1825 Lamb was employed at East India House. In 1796 his mother was killed by his sister Mary in a fit of insanity, and Lamb, who was himself liable to become mentally unbalanced, undertook the charge of his sister from that time, and they remained together, mutually devoted, until his death. Lamb's earliest work appeared in print in 1796. In 1806 he had a farce produced at Drury Lane, but it proved a failure. The *Tales from Shakespeare* were published in 1807. The first series of his *Essays of Elia* were first published in book form in 1823; they had already appeared as contributions to the *London Magazine*. A volume containing the second series appeared in 1833.

The last two years of Lamb's life were spent at Edmonton, where he is buried. His sister Mary survived him for thirteen

years. Macaulay wrote of him, 'We admire his genius; we love the kind nature which appears in all his writings; and we cherish his memory as much as if we had known him personally.'

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR [1775-1864]. (*page 226*) Born at Warwick where his father was a physician. He was sent to school at Rugby but his violent temper and opposition to discipline led to his being withdrawn to avoid expulsion. He had already shown considerable talent which developed when he went into residence at Trinity College, Oxford, but again he came into conflict with authority and was sent down without a degree. A quarrel with his father was the result, and Landor came to London where in 1795 he published his first volume of verse. On the publication of *Gebir* in 1798 Southey alone among the leading writers of the day showed any interest, but the lifelong friendship between the two did not begin until about ten years later, by which time Landor, having succeeded to his family estates, had bought Llanthony Abbey in Glamorganshire. In 1808 Landor took part in the rev. ' of the Spanish against the French. In 1811 he contracted an unfortunate marriage with the daughter of a ruined Swiss banker and by 1814 he had so mismanaged his affairs that he was in almost the same financial state as his father-in-law. He removed to Italy and lived in Florence from 1821 to 1829, in which year the last volume of his famous *Imaginary Conversations* appeared. The first had been published in 1824. Many further works appeared, but his temper and arrogance constantly got him into trouble, and in 1858 when he was living in solitude at Bath a threatened libel action left him in dire straits from which he was rescued only by the kindness of Browning. He spent the last six years of his life at Florence where he died at the age of eighty-nine.

WILLIAM JULIUS MICKLE [1734-88]. (*page 87*) Born at Langholm in Dumfriesshire in 1734, son of a minister. Engaged in a brewery of which he became a partner, but failed in business and went to London where he hoped to win literary distinction. In spite of the encouragement of Lord Lyttelton success evaded

him and after two years of destitution he managed to find employment in the Clarendon Press at Oxford. Here he published *Pollio*, an elegy, and *The Concubine*, a moral poem in the manner of Spenser, which was well received and ran quickly into three editions. In 1771 appeared the first canto of Mickle's translation of Camoens' *Lusiad* which he completed in 1776. This was also approved by the critics and the public and after a visit to Portugal where he was received with much honour Mickle married and settled down to a leisured life at Forest Hill, near Oxford, where he lived until his death.

His best known poems are his *Cumnor Hall*, which is supposed to have suggested to Sir Walter Scott the groundwork of *Kenilworth*, and his *Mariner's Wife*, better known as *There's nae Luck about the House*, in which he recaptures much of the simple tenderness of the old ballads.

THOMAS MOORE [1779-1852]. (page 179) Born at Dublin, the son of a grocer, and educated at a local Grammar School and Trinity College, Dublin. In 1799 he came to London and became a law student at the Middle Temple. His *Odes of Anacreon* appeared in 1800 and a volume of poems under the pen-name of 'Thomas Little' in 1801. In 1803 he was appointed Admiralty Registrar at Bermuda. He soon left a deputy to do his work for him in Bermuda, and after travelling in the United States returned to London. Between 1807 and 1834 he produced in ten instalments his *Irish Melodies* for which he was paid a total of over £12,000. In 1811 he became friendly with Byron, and about the same time married Bessie Dyke, a young actress. His *Lalla Rookh* was published in 1817 and Longman paid Moore £3,000 for it, a larger sum than had ever before been paid for a single poem. Moore needed the money because the following year his deputy in Bermuda defaulted, leaving Moore with liabilities of £6,000. While adjusting his affairs Moore lived in France and Italy, writing prolifically. He returned to England in 1822. He published a *Life of Sheridan* in 1825 and the *Life and Letters of Byron* in 1830. In 1846 his only surviving child died, and Moore's mind became affected. In 1850 he was awarded a

at Trinity College, Dublin, where he was censured by the authorities for offences against discipline. About 1692 he became secretary to Sir William Temple at Moor Park and obtained an M.A. at Oxford University. He then decided to take orders in the Irish Church, and after a short spell as an Irish country parson became chaplain to Lord Berkeley who obtained for him various Irish livings and a prebend. In 1701 Swift became a political writer on the side of the Whigs and was associated with Addison, Steele and Halifax. His *Tale of a Tub* was published in 1704. In 1710 he quarrelled with the Whigs and transferred his allegiance to the Tories who welcomed him warmly and rewarded him in 1713 with the deanery of St Patrick's, Dublin. Esther Johnson, immortalized as 'Stella', Swift had first met at Moor Park. His relations with her are obscure, nor is it known for certain whether or not he ultimately married her. She certainly regarded him with affection and veneration as did also Esther Vanhomrigh ('Vanessa') whose hopeless attachment to Swift and jealousy of 'Stella' led to her tragic death. Swift's *Drapier's Letters* were published in 1724 and *Gulliver's Travels* in 1726. Other works displaying his amazing vitality and versatility came out throughout his life in a steady stream until towards the end when his reason gave way. He was buried in St Patrick's Cathedral amidst the tears and prayers of the whole of Ireland, the land which he loved but had treated to such an odd mixture of kisses and curses. Most of Swift's fortune amounting to £10,000 he left, as promised at the conclusion of his poem on his own death, which was published fourteen years before the event, to found a lunatic asylum in Dublin.

JAMES THOMSON [1700-48]. (*page 40*) Born at Ednam, Roxburghshire, where his father was minister. He was brought up at Southdean, near Jedburgh, to which parish his father had moved, and educated at Jedburgh and Edinburgh University. While Thomson was at the University his father died through being struck by 'a ball of fire' and Thomson as a result was throughout his life apprehensive of the supernatural. It had been intended that he should enter the Church, but he was already writing

poetry, and he finally left the University without a degree. In 1725 Thomson came to London and lived in poverty while writing *Winter*, the first of his *Seasons*. He had difficulty in finding a publisher for it, being told again and again that it was 'an elegant poem, but containing too much description and too little wit;— could he not write something in the style of Pope or Gay?' At last, thanks to the help of influential acquaintances who included Gay and Pope themselves, the poem appeared, but it was on the whole frigidly received and it was some months before the praise of a few discerning judges steered it to success. It then ran quickly into three editions. *Spring* followed in 1728 and the complete edition of *The Seasons* in 1730. At this point Thomson was engaged as private tutor to Charles Talbot, son of the Solicitor-General, and in this capacity spent two happy years travelling on the Continent where he wrote a long poem entitled *Liberty*. Soon after his return to England Thomson was appointed Secretary of Briefs to the Court of Chancery and, some years later Surveyor-General of the Leeward Islands. Meanwhile his pen was busy, his works including a series of tragedies, and a masque which contained *Rule Britannia*. His *Castle of Indolence* was published in 1748. He died of a fever resulting from a cold caught through returning to his house in Kew Lane, Richmond, by boat on a chilly evening. He was buried in Richmond churchyard and in 1762 a monument was erected to him in Westminster Abbey.

THOMAS TICKELL [1686–1740]. (page 31) Born at Bridekirk, near Carlisle. Son of a clergyman. Educated at Queen's College, Oxford. Contributed to the *Spectator* and was a close friend of Addison. His elegy on Addison's death is his best-known work. Among his other poems were *Kensington Gardens*, a ballad entitled *Colin and Lucy* and a translation of the first book of the *Iliad* which Addison pronounced superior to Pope's. Tickell, largely through Addison's influence, held various official appointments, including the office of Secretary to the Lords Justices of Ireland. He died at Bath.

ISAAC WATTS [1674-1748]. (*page 24*) Born at Southampton, son of a Nonconformist schoolmaster. He became a minister at Stoke Newington, but his health proving unequal to his duties he was taken into the household of a wealthy landowner in the district where he spent the last thirty-six years of his life, devoting most of his time to religious study and pious writing. He was accorded a monument in Westminster Abbey.

JOHN WOLCOT (PETER PINDAR) [1738-1819]. (*page 110*) Born at Dodbrooke in Devon and provided with a medical education by his uncle, a surgeon and apothecary at Fowey. Became physician to Sir William Trelawney, Governor of Jamaica, and there took Holy Orders. On Trelawney's death Wolcot returned to England and started medical practice at Truro where he discovered the artistic talents of Opie. He brought his protégé to London and there helped him to establish his name. At the same time, under his pen-name of *Peter Pindar*, Wolcot began to pour out a series of odes, epistles and pamphlets satirizing the prominent men of the day; the King himself being one of his most frequent victims. So savage were his assaults and so wide his audience that it is said the Ministry tried to bribe him into silence, but his volleys of abuse and ridicule, much of it coarse and in the worst of taste but marked by a shrewd wit and quick sense of the ludicrous, continued unquenchably until his death. He was buried in a vault of the churchyard of St Paul's, Covent Garden, close to the grave of Samuel Butler.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH [1770-1850]. (*page 150*) Born at Cockermouth in Cumberland, the son of a lawyer. He was educated at the Grammar School, Hawkshead, and St John's College, Cambridge. In 1790 he went on a walking tour in France, Switzerland and Italy, and the following year he stayed for a time in Paris and there became infused with republican enthusiasm. In 1793 he published *An Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches*. That his republican ardour gave place to disillusionment and pessimism as he witnessed the horrors of the

'Terror' is clearly seen in *The Borderers* written in 1795-6. In the same year he met Coleridge, and Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy lived for a year at Alfoxden in Somerset, in close friendship with Coleridge and his wife who had a house in the nearby village of Nether Stowey. Together in 1798 they published *Lyrical Ballads* and in the following year the four of them went to Germany. There Wordsworth began *The Prelude*, and wrote *Lucy Gray* and other lyric poems. In 1799 he and his sister settled at Grasmere and there, except for occasional tours, Wordsworth spent the remainder of his life. In 1800 he published an enlarged edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* containing a critical essay expounding his principles of poetry, and to this year also belongs *Michael*. In 1802, owing to the unexpected repayment of a debt, his fortunes improved and he married Mary Hutchinson. During the following few years he suffered much from the death of his brother John and the misfortunes which overtook Coleridge. In 1805 he completed *The Prelude*, which was not, however, published until after his death. In 1807 came *Ode to Duty*, *Intimations of Immortality*, *Miscellaneous Sonnets*, *Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty*, and *The White Doe of Rylstone* - the latter was not, however, published until 1815. In 1813 he was appointed to the office of Distributor of Stamps for Westmorland. During 1814 came the *Excursion* and *Laodamia* and further poems in 1816-7. *Peter Bell*, written in 1798, and *The Waggoner* in 1805, were published in 1819 and the *Ecclesiastical Sonnets* in 1822. In the years that followed he travelled on the Continent and in Scotland and Ireland, but little of the poetry he then wrote is of very much consequence. In 1842 he resigned from his post as Distributor of Stamps and in 1843 succeeded Southey as Poet Laureate. He is buried at Grasmere.

EDWARD YOUNG [1684-1765]. (page 49) Born at Upham in Hampshire, where his father - later dean of Salisbury - was rector. He was educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford, and was awarded a law fellowship at All Souls in 1708. His hopes of a political career were frustrated when the notorious Duke of Wharton who had been his patron died, and after

publishing his satires on *Love of Fame*, *The Universal Passion*, he decided to take Holy Orders. In 1730 he obtained from his college the living of Welwyn in Hertfordshire where he spent the remaining years of his long life. In 1731 Young married Lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the second Earl of Lichfield. She died ten years later, and Young began the composition of his *Night Thoughts* which were published from 1742 to 1744. They marked the final stage in his transition from the irresponsible protégé of one of the most vicious peers of the time to the moralist and ascetic divine that he had become at sixty. In 1761 Young was made Clerk of the Closet to the Princess-dowager of Wales. Although it is on the *Night Thoughts* that Young's reputation rests, he was throughout his life a prolific poet and the author also of three tragedies, *Basiris*, *The Revenge* (both produced at Drury Lane), and *The Brothers*.

all List pension, and in 1852 he died at Sloperton Cottage in Shire and was buried at Bromham.

CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS [1739-1832]. (page 174) Was author of some bright and vigorous verse and convivial which were highly popular at the time they were written. Now forgotten. It is recounted that when the original of Mackerray's *Costigan* died and was buried under the windows of Offley's, Captain Morris read a mock funeral service, and then emptied a bowl of punch over the grave.

ALEXANDER POPE [1688-1744]. (page 25) Born at Lombard Street, London, in 1688. The son of a linen draper. Possibly owing to the delicacy of their only child the family moved soon after his birth to Binfield near Windsor and there Pope's childhood and early youth passed peacefully. He was gravely deformed - a hunchback cripple - and subject during the whole of his life to severe nervous headaches. His physical defects and his religion - his parents were devoted Roman Catholics - made serious schooling an impossibility, although he did for a short time attend a school at Twyford near Winchester. He is said to have been removed in some haste from this school as the result of the unfortunate discovery of lampoons he composed upon the masters. His future education continued at home.

Very early in his life he began to write verse. As he said of himself, 'I lisped in numbers for the numbers came,' and before he was 25 such poems as his *Pastorals* (1709), *Essay on Criticism* (1711) and his famous mock-heroic poem *The Rape of the Lock*, had been published and appreciated by the public.

Encouraged and flattered by the then senile Wycherley during his early years, and having always before him the memory of one short meeting in a coffee house with Dryden while he, Pope, was still a very small boy, he continued during the whole of his life to gather around him the literary genius of the day. Addison, Swift, Gay and many others were among those who visited him when, with his parents, he removed first to Chiswick in 1716 and then, on the death of his father in 1718, with his

mother to a villa at Twickenham. This small but charming house and garden he perfected and there he entertained and saw much of those devoted sisters Martha and Teresa Blount.

Too often the acerbity of his tongue was turned upon his friends, but much of his irascibility and nervous anger must have been the result of too great a burden being put upon his frail and malformed physique.

Of himself he said: 'A lively little creature with long legs and arms; a spider is no ill emblem of him; he has been taken at a distance for a small windmill.' But small and deformed though he was, it was his large bright eyes and wide forehead that left most impression on all who met him.

During the latter part of his life he wrote little and in 1744, worn out with dropsy and asthma, he died. Although acknowledged at the time to be the greatest poet of his day he was, by being a Roman Catholic, debarred from burial in Westminster Abbey and he lies beside his mother at Twickenham.

MATTHEW PRIOR [1664-1721]. (*page 16*) Born at Wimborne, the son of a joiner. He was educated for a time at Westminster School, but the death of his father left the family poor and Prior was taken away from school and put to work under an uncle at a wine-house where Lord Dorset one day found him reading Horace. Under Lord Dorset's patronage he was sent back to Westminster and obtained a scholarship at St John's College Cambridge. He then became secretary to the British Ambassador at The Hague and took an active part in the negotiations over the Treaty of Ryswick. On his return to England in 1699 he was appointed to an Under-Secretaryship of State. In 1711 he was sent to Paris, and the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 became popularly known as 'Matt's Peace'. On the fall of the Tories from power he was impeached, and was in prison from 1715 to 1717. While in prison he wrote a long poem entitled *Alma or the Progress of the Mind* and on his release a lavishly produced folio of his poems was issued by his friends and brought him £4,000. His *Solomon on the Vanity of the World* appeared in 1719. The last few years of Prior's life were spent in comfort at Down

Hall, Essex, which had been bought for him by Lord Harley. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

ALLAN RAMSAY [1686-1758]. (*page 32*) Born at Leadhills, Lanarkshire, where his father was a mines manager. He was educated at the village school and at the age of fifteen apprenticed to a wig-maker in Edinburgh. There, after some years, he became associated with a group of young Jacobites and began to produce light humorous verses. In 1712 he made a happy marriage with Christian Ross, the daughter of a writer, and soon afterwards gave up wig making to set up a bookshop. He edited some collections of Scottish songs and in 1725 his pastoral drama, *The Gentle Shepherd*, appeared. It was immediately successful and won him the approving notice of Gay and Pope. Ramsay next established the first Scottish circulating library, but a subsequent venture in theatrical management was unlucky and lost him most of his savings. He gradually retrieved his fortunes sufficiently to be able to build himself an octagonal house on the north side of the Castle-hill in Edinburgh where he died, leaving a son destined to be one of the most distinguished of Scottish artists.

RICHARD SAVAGE [1697-1743]. (*page 37*) Born in London, reputed to be the illegitimate child of the fourth Earl Rivers and the wife of the second Earl of Macclesfield. Little is known of his early days. His first poem was published in 1717 and a comedy, *Love in a Veil*, was produced the next year. He lived a dissipated existence and in 1727 was condemned to death for killing a man in a tavern brawl. He secured a pardon from Queen Caroline who also allowed him a pension of £50 a year in return for an annual birthday ode. On the Queen's death this pension was continued by his friends, who included Pope, for whom Savage supplied the 'private intelligence and secret incidents' for *The Dunciad*. His best known poems, *The Bastard* and *The Wanderer*, were published in 1728 and 1729, but it is possible that *The Bastard* was in fact written by Aaron Hill and generously fathered by him on his protégé. In the end Savage's

extravagance and loose life landed him in Bristol prison on a debt charge. There he died.

SIR WALTER SCOTT [1771-1832]. (page 169) Born in Edinburgh, the son of a Writer to the Signet, he was educated at Edinburgh High School and afterwards at the University there. He was called to the Bar in 1792 and later in that year as the result of a visit to the Lowlands his interest in Border tales and ballads was kindled and further stimulated by the reading of Percy's *Reliques* and much romantic Continental poetry. His first published works were translations of Goethe and other German poets in 1796, to be followed in 1802 by a collection of Scottish ballads. In 1797 he married Charlotte Charpentier the daughter of a French emigré and in 1799 was appointed Deputy Sheriff of Selkirkshire. About this time he renewed his friendship with a schoolfellow, James Ballantyne, and he it was who published for Scott in 1799 some original ballads and translations under the title *Apology for Tales of Terror*. In 1802-3 came *Border Minstrelsy* and in 1805 *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. Scott then went into partnership with Ballantyne and in the next few years they published *Marmion*, *The Lady of the Lake*, *Rokeby*, *The Bridal of Triermain*, *The Lord of the Isles* and in 1817 his last long poem *Harold the Dauntless*. Most of these enjoyed such popular success that in 1812 he was able to move to Abbotsford, a large and romantically placed house upon the Tweed. Finding that the phenomenal sale of Byron's poems was likely to lose him his public he turned to prose and in 1814 he published *Waverley* anonymously. This novel was received by the public with delight and in the years that followed he turned out one *Waverley* novel after another. In 1819 he was created a baronet and all went well until 1826 when the collapse of the Ballantyne bookselling business and of his publisher, Constable, suddenly rendered him liable for £130,000. With amazing spirit he applied himself to the task of writing in order to meet his debts, and when in 1832 he died he had already repaid much of the enormous sum he owed. He is buried at Dryburgh Abbey.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY [1792-1822]. (page 189) Born at Field Place, Sussex, the son of a country gentleman, and educated at Eton and University College, Oxford. In 1811 he was sent down from the latter for writing an atheistic pamphlet. For this, incurring the grave displeasure of his father, he was forbidden to return home. In company with T. J. Hogg he went to London. He had, however, by this time been brought before the public by the publication of such works as *Zastrozzi* and *St Irvyne*. In the same year he married sixteen-year-old Harriet Westbrook, with whom he led an unsettled life for three years, during which he wrote *Queen Mab*. In 1814 he left England with Mary Wollstonecraft, whom he subsequently married in 1816, after the wretched Harriet had drowned herself. Jane Clairmont, Mary's step-sister, accompanied them on their continental travels. His *Alasor* was published, although written earlier, in 1816. To this period also belong *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty* and *Mont Blanc*. Returning to England for a short time, 1816-7, he wrote at Marlow, among other poems, *Laon and Cythna* and *Prince Athanase*. In 1818 he was once more in Italy and much of his time was spent with Byron. While there he wrote *Rosalind and Helen*, *Lines written in the Euganean Hills*, *Julian and Maddalo* and *Stanzas written in Dejection near Naples*, and later in Rome in 1819 an indictment of the political events at home in *Masque of Anarchy*, and also *The Cenci*. In 1820 he finished *Prometheus Unbound*. About this time, too, he wrote *Ode to the West Wind*, *To a Skylark*, *The Sensitive Plant*, *Adonais* on the death of his friend Keats, and *Epipsychidion* and other poems. In 1821 the Shelleys moved to Lerici on the shores of the Bay of Spezia and there, inspired like Byron with the fire of the Greek revolt, he wrote *Hellas*. In 1822 while sailing in the Bay he was drowned. He is buried at Rome.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE [1714-63]. (page 53) Born at Leasowes in Shropshire. His early education was at a dame-school and provided material for his poem *The Schoolmistress*, published in 1742. In 1732 he went to Pembroke College, Oxford, where he was a contemporary of Samuel Johnson. In 1745 he

inherited the family estate at Leasowes and concentrated on the care and adornment of its quite modest grounds to an extent which made it a place visited by tourists and copied by designers. Shenstone, indeed, spent so much on external embellishment that the house itself became too dilapidated to be fit, as he admitted, for the reception of 'polite friends'. An unfortunate love affair and the disappointment of ambitions to achieve high celebrity either as a poet or politician made Shenstone towards the end of his life querulous and dejected. Apart from his *Schoolmistress* Shenstone's best known work is his *Pastoral Ballad* published in 1755, but most of his numerous poems and essays were not published until after his death, when they were collected by his friend Dodsley.

RICHARD BRINSLEY BUTLER SHERIDAN [1751-1816]. (page 95) Born at Dublin, the son of an Irish actor, Thomas Sheridan, and Frances Chamberlain, his wife, herself a not unsuccessful playwright. His early education was scanty and somewhat intermittent, but in 1762 he was sent to Harrow. In 1773 he became involved in a cause célèbre when, after fighting two duels at Bath with a Major Mathews, he succeeded in removing an enchanting singer, Elizabeth Linley, from the persecutions of the wicked Major, and escorting her to France, where he secretly married her. This episode led to a serious and protracted breach with his father.

In 1775 when he was 24 his play *The Rivals* was produced at Covent Garden and brought instantaneous success to him. *St Patrick's Day* and *The Duenna* were played in the same year. In 1776 he acquired Garrick's share of Drury Lane Theatre and in 1777 produced there *A Trip to Scarborough* and *The School for Scandal*. *The Critic* was given in 1779 and *Pizarro* in 1791. Both he and his wife delighted all who met them with their wit and charm, and with the success of his plays they were quickly absorbed into the famous Devonshire House set of which Fox was a prominent member. In 1780 Sheridan was returned to Parliament as a supporter of Fox, and there in 1787 made his famous six-hour speech on the impeachment of Warren Hast-

ings. He was Treasurer of the Navy from 1806-7. From that time his fortunes declined; his wife died, and in 1809 the theatre which he had built in 1794 was burnt down. In 1813 he was arrested for debt and in 1816, deserted by those he had known in his time of success, he died in poverty.

CHRISTOPHER SMART [172- 71]. (*page 83*) Born at Shipbourne, Kent, son of the steward to Lord Barnard who on Smart's father's death, when Smart was eleven, gave the boy the benefit of his patronage and secured for him an allowance of £40 a year from the Duchess of Cleveland. This enabled Smart to go to Cambridge University where he became a Fellow of Pembroke. Smart worked hard, composed poetry in Latin as well as in English, wrote a comedy for production at his College and was popular with his colleagues; but already he had begun to indulge in the dissipation and extravagance that, as Gray his contemporary at Cambridge prophesied, would lead him to jail or Bedlam. In 1753 he married a step-daughter of Newberry, the good-natured, red-nosed bookseller described in Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield* and removed to London to take up authorship as a profession. He published a satire, *The Hilliad*, attacking Sir John Hill, the quack doctor, and translations of Phaedrus and Horace. He also made an indifferent version of the psalms, and was engaged on a monthly publication called *The Universal Visitor*. In 1763 Smart had to be confined in a mad-house. Dr Johnson's comment was, 'I did not think he ought to be shut up. His infirmities were not noxious to Society. He insisted on people praying with him - also calling upon his knees and saying his prayers in the street, or in any other universal place; and I'd as lief pray with Kit Smart as anyone else.' Smart's *Song to David*, one of the curiosities of English literature, was written at this time and much of it he scratched with a key on the walls of his apartment, writing materials being denied him. He was ultimately released, only to be committed shortly afterwards to the King's Bench prison for debt. There he died after a short illness.

CAROLINE SOUTHEY [1787-1854]. (page 225) Daughter of Captain Charles Bowles of Buckland, near Lymington, in Hampshire. Southey, as poet-laureate, took an interest in her early poems and the friendship developed until in 1839, two years after the death of his first wife, when Southey was sixty-five and already suffering from bodily and mental weakness, they married. Caroline nursed Southey devotedly for the four years of life that remained to him, and on his death in 1843 retired again to Buckland where she died eleven years later.

ROBERT SOUTHEY [1774-1843]. (page 170) Born at Bristol, the son of a linen draper. Brought up by an eccentric aunt, he was educated at Westminster, whence he was expelled as the result of an essay upon the evils of flogging. This sudden termination of his school career did not, however, prevent him from being sent to Balliol College, Oxford. While there he met Coleridge and together they hatched their plan for settlement in America. After his marriage to Coleridge's wife's sister he travelled in Spain and Portugal. *Thalaba* was published in 1801, *Madoc* in 1805, *The Curse of Kehama* in 1810, *Roderick* in 1814, *A Tale of Paraguay* in 1825 and *All for Love* in 1829. Among his better known prose works, *The Life of Nelson* was published in 1813, *The Life of Wesley* in 1820 and *History of Brazil* in 1810-19. From 1803 until the end of his life Southey lived at Keswick and there it was he gave generous hospitality and friendship to Coleridge's unhappy wife and family. In 1813 he became Poet Laureate and from 1835 enjoyed a pension of £300 a year. In 1834 his wife became insane and in 1837 she died. Two years later he married Caroline Bowles; but his health had already broken down and he had only four years of life left. He is buried in the churchyard at Crosthwaite.

JONATHAN SWIFT [1667-1745]. (page 43) Born at Dublin of English parentage after his father's death. When a year old he was kidnapped by his nurse and removed to Whitehaven, where he lived for three years and was well cared for. On returning to Ireland he was educated at Kilkenny Grammar School and later